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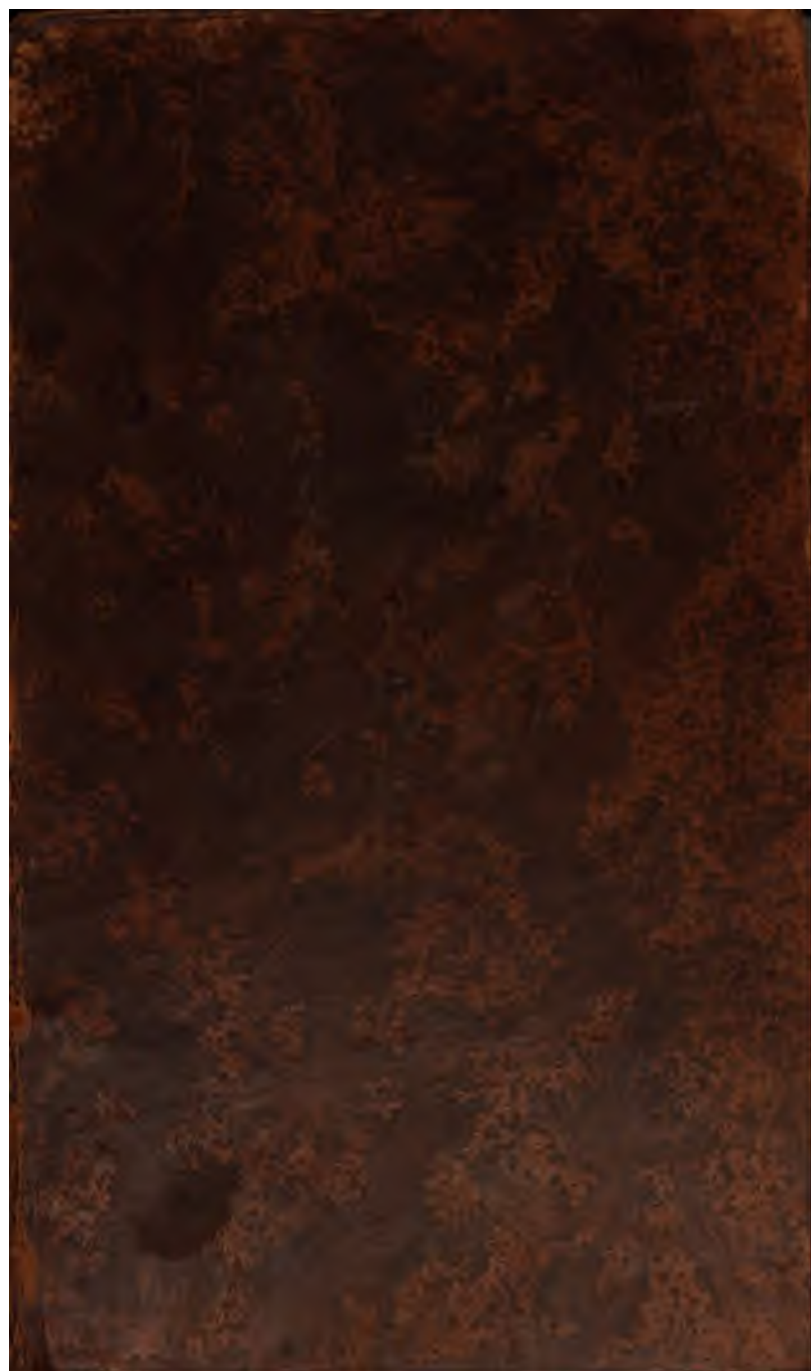
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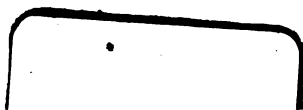
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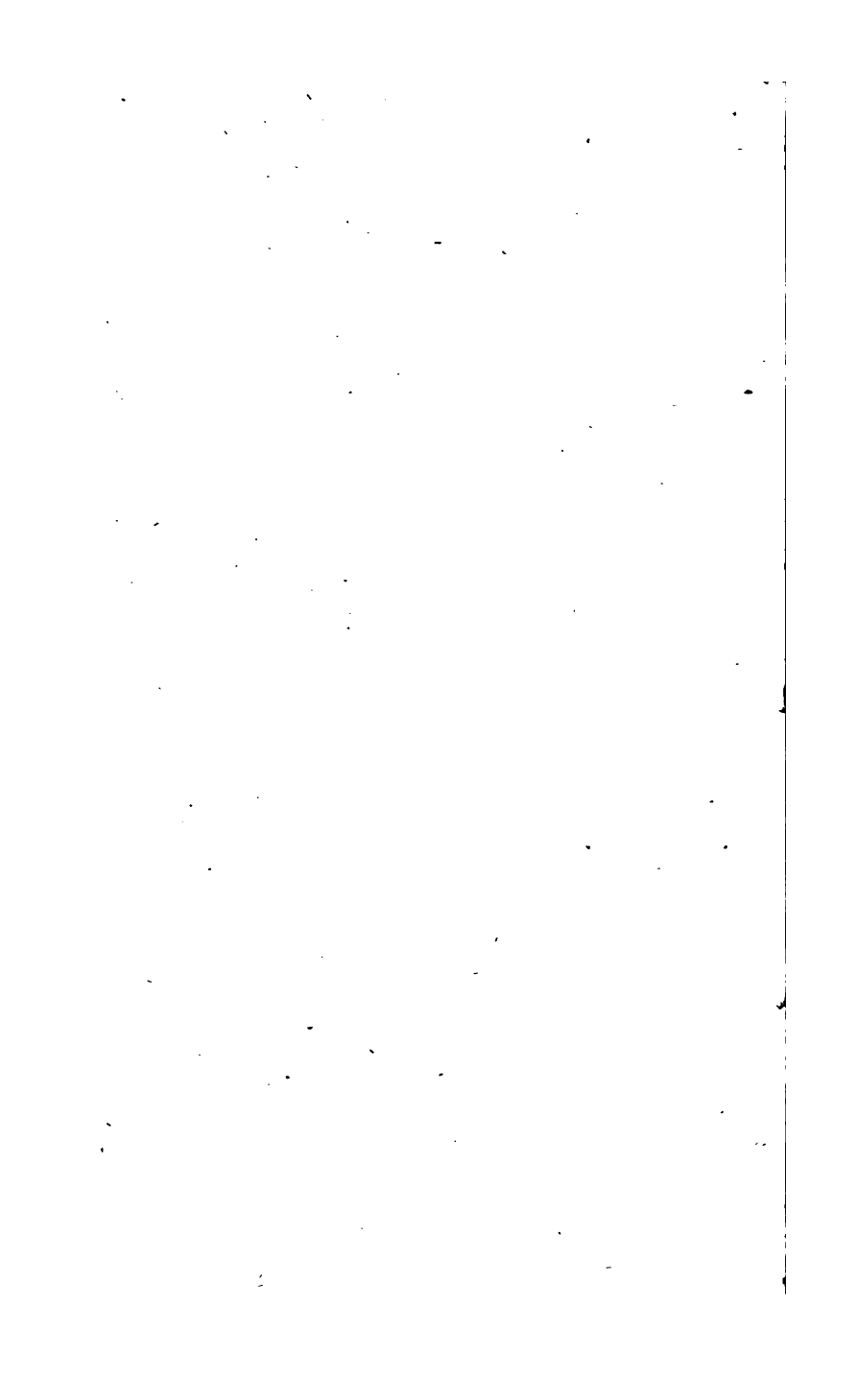
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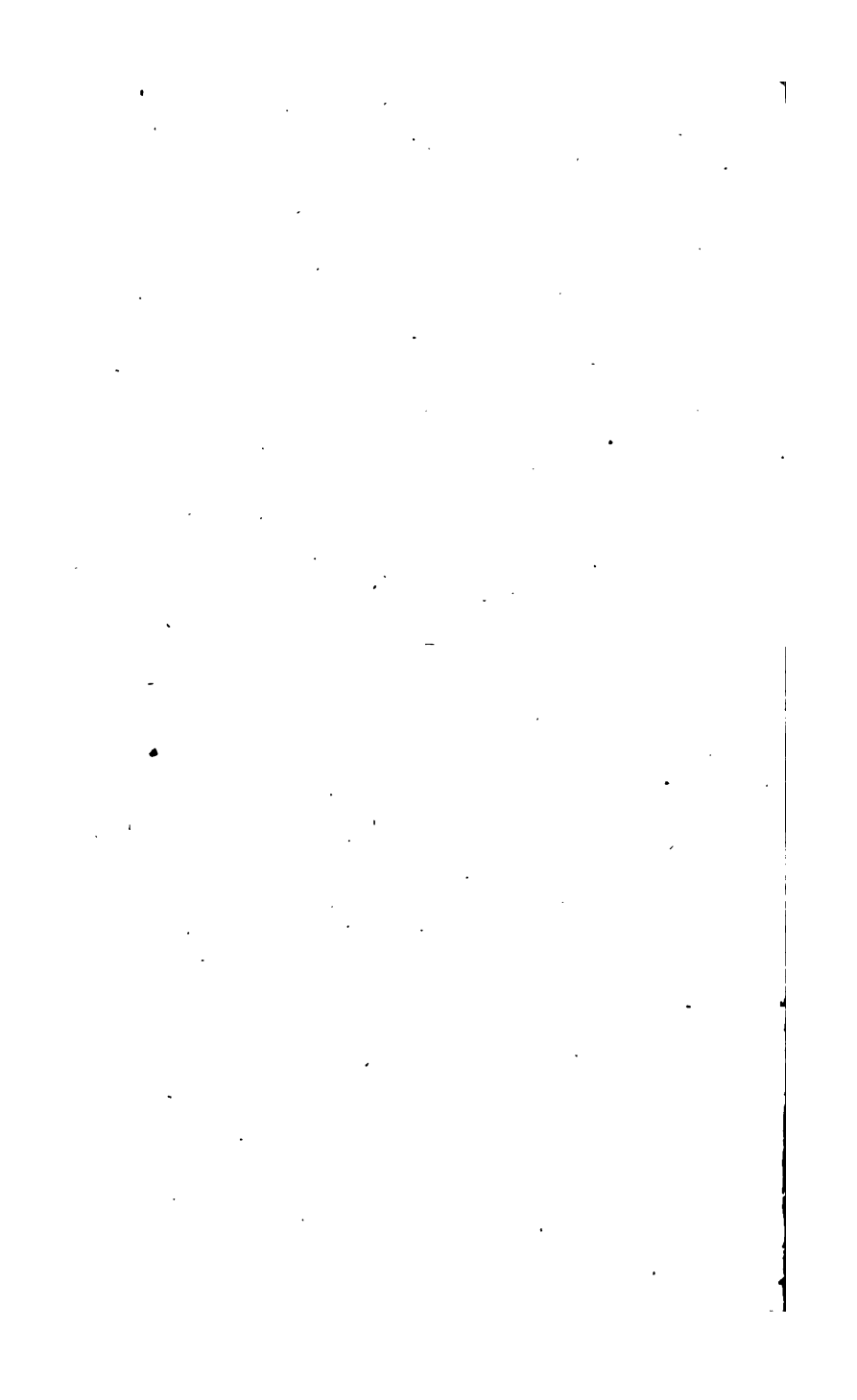
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THE
CHILDREN OF THE ABBEY.

A TALE.

IN FOUR VOLUMES.

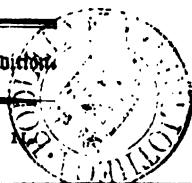
BY
REGINA MARIA ROCHE.

A matchless pair ;
With equal virtue form'd, and equal grace ;
The same, distinguish'd by their sex alone ;
Her's the mild lustre of the blooming morn,
And his the radiance of the risen day.

THOMSON.

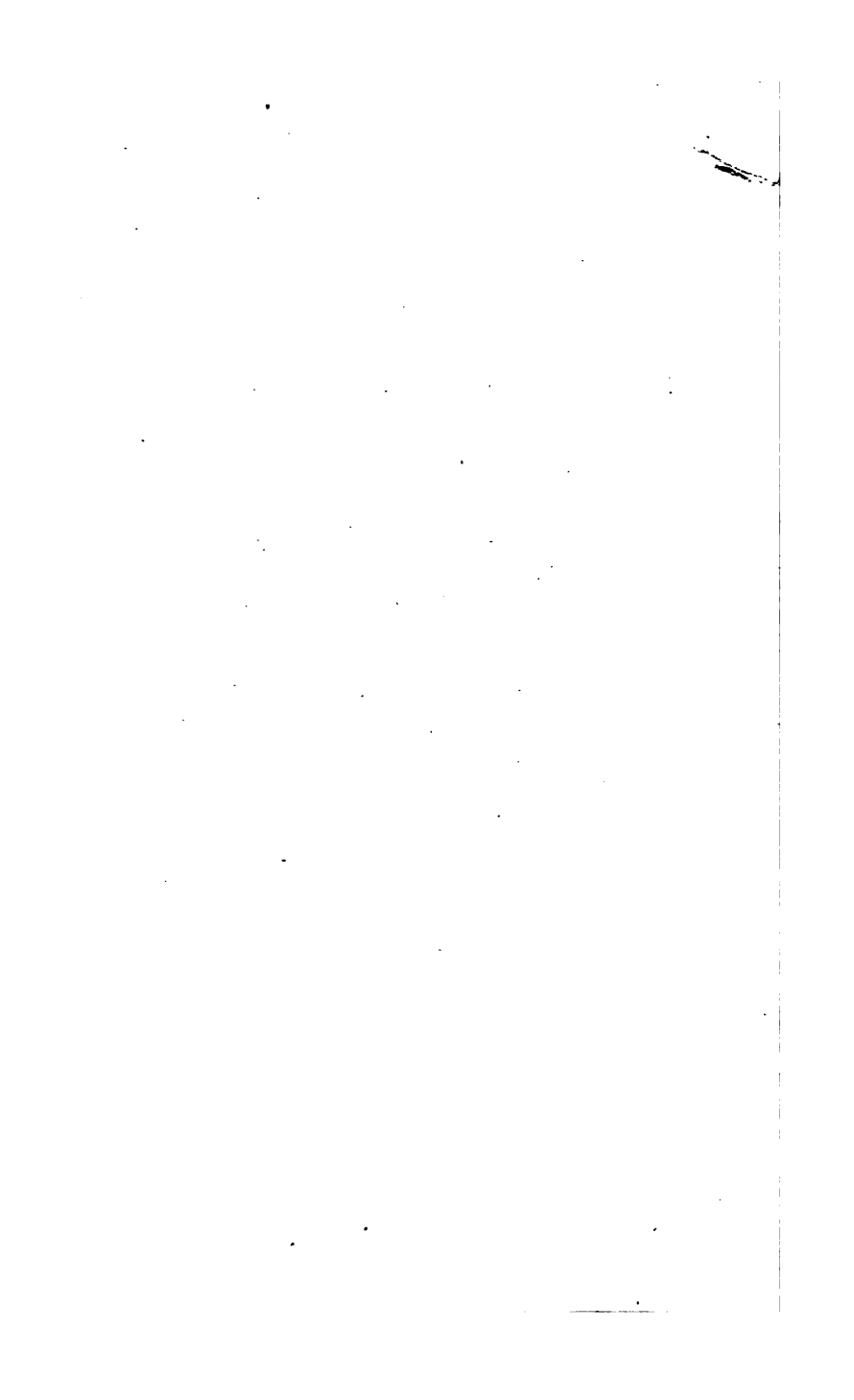
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THE
CHILDREN OF THE ABBEY.

CHAP. I.

Oh fields! oh woods! when, when shall I be made
The happy tenant of your shade.

COWLEY.

SOLITUDE to Amanda was a luxury, as it afforded her opportunities of indulging the ideas on which her heart delighted to dwell; she yet believed she should see Lord Mortimer, and that Lord Cherbury's sanctioning their attachment would remove the delicate scruples of her father. From soothing his passing hours, beguiling her own with the accomplishments she possessed, and indulging the tender suggestions of hope, a pleasure arose she thought ill exchanged for the trifling gaiety of the parties she was frequently invited to; she was never at a loss for amusement within Castle Carberry, or about its domain; the garden became the object of her peculiar care; its

situation was romantic, and long neglect had added to its natural wildness. Amanda in many places discovered vestiges of taste, and wished to restore all to primeval beauty: the fruit-trees were matted together, the alleys, grass ground, and the flowers, choaked with weeds; on one side lay a small wilderness, which surrounded a Gothic temple, and on the other green slopes, with masses of naked rock projecting through them; a flight of rugged steps, cut in the living rock, led to a cave on the summit of one of the highest; a cross rudely carved upon the wall, and the remains of a matted couch, denoted this having formerly been a hermitage; it overhung the sea, and all about it were tremendous crags, against which the waves beat with violence; over a low and arched door was a smooth stone, with the following lines engraved upon it:—

The pilgrim oft

At dead of night, 'mid his orisons, hears

Aghast the voice of Time—disparting towers

Trembling all precipitate down, dash'd

Rattling around, loud thund'ring to the moon.

DYZ.

Under Amanda's superintending care, the garden soon lost its rude appearance; a new couch was procured for the hermitage, which she ornamented with shells and sea weeds, rendering it a most delightful recess; the trees were pruned, the alleys cleared of opposing brambles, and over the wall of the Gothic temple she hung the flowers she had purchased at St. Catherine's in fanciful wreaths.

She

She often ascended the devious path of the mountain, which stretched beyond Castle Carberry, and beheld the waves glittering in the sun-beams, from which its foliage sheltered her; but no visionary pleasures, no delightful rambles, no domestic avocations made her forgetful to the calls of benevolence; she visited the haunts of poverty, and relieved its necessities to the utmost of her power; the wretchedness, so often conspicuous among many of the lower rank, filled her not only with compassion but surprise, as she had imagined that liberty and a fruitful soil were generally attended with comfort and prosperity; her father, to whom she communicated this idea, informed her, that the indigence of the peasants proceeded in a great degree from the emigration of their landlords. "Their wealth," said he, "is spent in foreign lands, instead of enriching those from whence it was drawn. Policy should sometimes induce them to visit their estates; the revenue of half a year spent on them would necessarily benefit the poor wretches whose labours have contributed to raise it; and by exciting their gratitude, add inclination to industry, and consequently augment their profits.

"The clouds, which are formed by mists and exhalations, return to the places from whence they were drawn in fertilizing showers and refreshing dews, and almost every plant enriches the soil from which it sprung. Nature, indeed, in all her works, is a glorious precedent to man; but while enslaved by diffi-

pation he cannot follow her example; and what exquisite sources of enjoyment does he lose, to lighten the toils of labour, to cheer the child of poverty, to raise the drooping head of merit? Oh! how superior to the revels of dissipation, or the ostentation of wealth.

“ Real happiness is forsaken for a gaudy phantom called Pleasure; she is seldom grasped but for a moment, yet in that moment has power to fix envenomed stings within the breast; the heart which delights in domestic joys, which rises in pious gratitude to Heaven, which melts at human woe, can alone experience true pleasure. The fortitude with which the peasants bear their sufferings should cure discontent of its murmurs; they support adversity without complaining, and those who possess a pile of turf against the severity of the winter, a small strip of ground planted with cabbage and potatoes, a cow, a pig, and some poultry, think themselves completely happy, though one wretched hovel shelters all alike.”

Oh! how rapturous, thought Amanda, the idea of Lord Mortimer's feeling recurring to her mind, to change such scenes, to see the clay-built hovel vanish, and a dwelling of neatness and convenience rise in its stead; to wander, continued she, with him whose soul is fraught with sensibility, and view the projects of benevolence realized by the hand of charity; see the faded cheek of misery regain the glow of health,

“ The desert blossom as the rose,”

and

and content and cheerfulness sport beneath its shades.

From such an ecstatic reverie as this Amanda was roused one morning by the entrance of the Kilcorbans and Lady Greystock into the dressing-room, where she was working. "Oh! my dear," cried the eldest of the young ladies, "we have such enchanting news to tell you; only think who is coming down here immediately? Your uncle and aunt, and cousin. An express came this morning from Dublin, where they now are, to the steward at Ulster Lodge, to have every thing prepared against next week for them. "I declare," said Miss Alicia, "I shall quite envy you the delightful amusement you will have with them." Amanda blushed, and felt a little confused. "You will have no reason then, I fancy," replied she, "for I really do not know them."

"Oh Lord!" exclaimed Mrs. Kilcorban, "well, that is very comical, not to know your own relations; but perhaps they always lived in Scotland, and you were afraid to cross the sea to pay them a visit."—"If that was the only fear she had," said Lady Greystock, with a satyrical smile, "she could easily have surmounted it; besides, would it not have held good with respect to one place as well as another?"—"Well, I never thought of that," cried Mrs. Kilcorban; "but pray, Miss, may I ask the reason why you did not know them by letter?"—"It can be of

very little consequence to you, Madam," replied Amanda, coolly, "to hear it."

"They say Lady Euphrasia Sutherland is very accomplished," exclaimed Miss Kilcorban, "so a correspondence with her would have been delightful. I dare say you write sweetly yourself; so if you ever leave Castle Carberry, I beg you will favour me with letters, for of all things I doat on a sentimental correspondence."

"No wonder," said Lady Greystock, "you are so particularly well qualified to support one."

"But, my dear," resumed Miss Kilcorban, "we are to give the most enchanting ball that ever was given in this world. Papa says we shall have full liberty to do as we please respecting it."—"It will be a troublesome affair, I am afraid," said Mrs. Kilcorban.—"We are to have confectioners and French cooks from Dublin," continued her daughter, without minding this interruption; "every thing is to be quite in style, and prepared against the third night of the Marquis and Marchioness's arrival; so, my dear, you and your papa will hold yourselves in readiness for our summons." Amanda bowed. "My sister and I are to have dancing-dresses from town, but I will not give you an idea of the manner in which we have ordered them to be made; I assure you, you will be absolutely surprised and charmed when you see them. All the elegant men in the county

county will be at our entertainment; I dare say you will be vastly busy preparing for it."

"Nature," said Lady Greystock, "has been too bounteous to Miss Fitzalan, to render such preparations necessary."—"Oh Lord!" cried the young ladies, with a toss of their heads, "Miss Fitzalan is not such a fool, I suppose, as to wish to appear unlike every one else in her dress; but," rising with their mama, and saluting her much more formally than they had done at their entrance, "she is the best judge of that."

Fitzalan had never seen the Marchioness since his marriage, nor did he ever again wish to behold her; the inhumanity with which she had treated her lovely sister, the malice with which she had augmented her father's resentment against that poor sufferer, had so strongly prepossessed his mind with ideas of the selfishness and implacability of her's, as to excite sentiments of distaste and aversion for her; he considered her as the usurper of his children's rights, as accessory to the death of his adored Malvina, and consequently the author of the agonies he endured; agonies which time, aided by religion, could scarcely conquer.

CHAP. II.

Oh love! how are thy precious, sweetest minutes
 Thus ever cross'd, thus vex'd with disappointments;
 Now pride, now fickleness, fantastic quarrels,
 And sullen coldness gives us pain by turns.

Rowe.

AT the expected time, the Marquis and his family arrived with great splendour at Ulster Lodge, which was immediately crowded with visitors of the first consequence in the county, among whom were the Kilcorbans, whose affluent fortune gave them great respectability. Mr. Kilcorban wished, indeed, to be first in paying his compliments to the Marquis, who had a borough in his disposal he was desirous of being returned for. Disappointed the last time he set up as one of the candidates for the county, this was his only chance of entering that house he had long been ambitious for a seat in; he knew, indeed, his oratorical powers were not very great, often saying, he had not the gift of the gab like many of the honourable gentlemen; but then he should stamp and stare, and look up to gods and goddesses* for their

* Ladies are admitted into the gallery of the Irish House of Commons.

approbation

approbation with the best of them; and besides, his being a member of parliament would increase his consequence, at least in the country.

The female part of his family went from Ulster Lodge to Castle Carberry, which they entered with a more consequential air than ever, as if they derived new consequence from the visit they had been paying; instead of flying up to Amanda as usual, the young ladies swam into the room, with what they imagined a most bewitching elegance; and making a sliding courtsey, flung themselves upon a sofa exactly opposite a glass, and alternately viewed themselves, and pursued their remarks on Lady Euphrasia's dress.—“Well, certainly, Alicia,” said Miss Kilcorban, “I will have a morning gown made in imitation of her Ladyship's; that frill of fine lace about the neck is the most becoming thing in nature, and the pale blue lining sweetly adapted for a delicate complexion.”—“I think, Charlotte,” cried Miss Alicia, “I will have my tambour muslin in the same style, but lined with pink to set off the work.”

“This aunt of your's, my dear,” exclaimed Mrs. Kilcorban, “is really a personable looking woman enough, and her daughter a pretty little sort of body.”

“Oh, they are charming creatures!” cried both the young ladies; “so elegant, so irresistibly genteel.”

"Your ideas and mine then," said Lady Greylock, "differ widely about elegance and irresistibility, if you ascribe either to the ladies in question. Mr. Kilcorban," continued she, turning to Amanda, "feared, I believe, my Lord Marquis would fly across the sea in a few hours, and that he might catch him ere he took wing, never ceased tormenting us from the time breakfast was over till we entered the carriage, to make haste, though he might have known it was quite too early for fine folks to be visible.

"Well, we posted off to Ulster Lodge, as if life and death depended on our dispatch. Mr. Kilcorban was ushered into the Marquis's study, and we into an empty room, to amuse ourselves, if we pleased, with portraits of the Marquis's ancestors; whilst bells in all quarters were tingling; maids and footmen running up and down stairs; and cats, dogs, monkeys, and parrots, who I found composed part of the travelling retinue, were scratching, barking, chattering, and screaming, in a room contiguous to the one we occupied. At length a fine perfumed jessamy made his appearance; and saying the ladies were ready to have the honour of receiving us, skipped up stairs like an harlequin. The Marchioness advanced about two steps from her couch to receive us, and Lady Euphrasia half rose from her seat; and after contemplating us for a minute, as if to know whether we were to be considered as human creatures or not, sunk
back

back into her former attitude of elegant languor, and continued her conversation with a young nobleman, who had accompanied them from England."

"Well, I hope you'll allow he is a divine creature!" exclaimed Miss Kilcorban, in an accent of rapture.—"Oh, what eyes he has!" cried her sister; "what an harmonious voice! I really never beheld any one so exquisitely handsome!"

"Lord Mortimer, indeed!" said Lady Greystock. Amanda started, blushed, turned pale, panted as if for breath, and stared as if in amazement.—"Bless me, Miss Fitzallan," asked her Ladyship, "are you ill?" "No, Madam," replied Amanda, in a trembling voice, "'tis only—'tis only a little palpitation of the heart I am subject to. I have interrupted your Ladyship, pray proceed."—"Well, continued Lady Greystock, "I was saying that Lord Mortimer was one of the most elegant and engaging young men I had ever beheld; his expressive eyes seemed to reprove the folly of his fair companion, and her neglect made him doubly assiduous, which to me was a most convincing proof of a noble mind."

How did the heart of Amanda swell with pleasure at this warm eulogium on Lord Mortimer! The tear of delight, of refined affection, sprung to her eye, and could scarcely be prevented falling.

"Lord, Madam," cried Miss Kilcorban, whose pride was mortified at Amanda's hearing of the cool reception they had met with, "I can't conceive the

reason you ascribe such rudeness and conceit to Lady Euphrasia; 'tis really quite a misconstruction of the etiquette necessary to be observed by people of rank."

"I am glad, my dear," replied Lady Greystock, "you are now beginning to profit by the many lessons I have given you on humility."

"I assure you, Miss," said Mrs. Kilcorban, "I did not forget to tell the Marchioness she had a niece in the neighbourhood. I thought, indeed, she seemed a little shy on the subject, so I suppose there has been a difference in the families, particularly as you don't visit her; but at our ball, perhaps, every thing may be settled." Amanda made no reply to this speech, and the ladies departed.

Her bosom, as may well be supposed, was agitated with the most violent perturbations on hearing of Lord Mortimer's being in the neighbourhood; the pleasure she felt at the first intelligence gradually subsided, on reflecting he was an inmate, probably a friend of those relations who had contributed to the destruction of her mother, and who, from the character she had heard of them, it was not uncharitable to think, would feel no great regret if her children experienced a destiny equally severe. Might they not infuse some prejudices against her into his bosom? To know she was the child of the unfortunate Malvina would be enough to provoke their enmity; or if they were silent, might not Lady Euphrasia, adorned with
every

every advantage of rank and fortune, have won, or at least soon win, his affections?

Yet scarcely did these ideas obtrude ere she reproached herself for them, as injurious to Lord Mortimer, from whose noble nature she thought she might believe his constancy never would be shaken, except she herself gave him reason to relinquish it.

She now cheered her desponding spirits, by recalling the ideas she had long indulged with delight, as her residence was still a secret to the Edwins, whose letters to their daughters were, by Fitzalan's orders, constantly directed to a distant town, from whence her's in return were sent; she concluded, chance had informed Lord Mortimer of it, and flattered herself, that, to avoid the suspicion which a solitary journey to Ireland might create in the mind of Lord Cherbury, he had availed himself of the Marquis's party, and come to try whether she was unchanged, and her father would sanction their attachment ere he avowed it to the Earl.

Whilst fluctuating between hope and fear, Ellen, all pale and breathless, ran into the room, exclaiming, "He is come! he is come! Lord Mortimer is come!"

"Oh Heavens!" sighed Amanda, sinking back in her chair, and dropping her trembling hands before her. Ellen, alarmed, blamed herself for her precipitation, and flying to a cabinet, snatched a bottle of lavender water from it, which she plentifully sprinkled
over

over her, and then assisted her to a window. "I was so flurried," cried the good-natured girl, as she saw her mistress recovering, "I did not know what I was about. Heaven knows, the sight of poor Chip himself could not have given me more pleasure. I was crossing the hall when I saw his Lordship alighting; and, to be sure, if one of the old warriors had stepped out of his niche, (and the devil take them all I say, for they grin so horribly, they frighten me out of my wits if I go through the hall of a dark evening)—so if one of them old fellows, as I was a saying, had jumped out, I could not have been more startled, and pack I ran into the little parlour, and there I heard his Lordship enquiring for my master; and, to be sure, the sound of his voice did my heart good, for he is an old friend, as one may say; so as soon as he went into the study, I stole upstairs; and one may guess what he and my master are talking about, I think."

The emotion of Amanda increased; she trembled so she could not stand; she felt as if her destiny, her future happiness, depended on this minute. In vain she endeavoured to regain composure; her spirits were wound up to the highest pitch of expectation, and the agitations inseparable from such a state were not to be repressed.

She continued near an hour in this situation, when the voice of Mortimer struck her ear; she started up, and standing in the center of the room, saw him walking down the lawn with her father, who left him
when

when he had reached the gate, where his servants and horses were. The chill of disappointment pervaded the heart of Amanda, and a shower of tears fell from her. Ellen, who had remained in the room, was almost as much disappointed as her mistress; she muttered something about the inconstancy of men; they were all, for her part, she believed, alike; all like Mr. Chip, captious on every occasion. The dinner-bell now summoned Amanda; she dried her eyes, and tied on a little straw hat to conceal their redness. With much confusion she appeared before her father; his penetrating eye was instantly struck with her agitation and pallid looks, and he conjectured she knew of the visit he had received. On receiving that visit, he wondered not at the strength of her attachment; the noble and ingenuous air of Lord Mortimer had immediately prepossessed Fitzalan in his favour; he saw him adorned with all those perfections which are calculated to make a strong and permanent impression on a heart of sensibility, and he gave a sigh to the cruel necessity which compelled him to separate two beings of such congenial loveliness; but as that necessity neither was or could be overcome, he rejoiced that Lord Mortimer, instead of visiting him on account of his daughter, had merely come on affairs relative to the castle, and had enquired for her with a coolness which seemed to declare his love totally subdued. Not the smallest hint relative to the letter, in which he had proposed for
her

her, dropped from him; and Fitzalan concluded his affections were transferred to some object more the favourite of fortune than his portionless Amanda.

This object, he was inclined to believe, was Lady Euphrasia Sutherland, from what Lord Cherbury had said concerning the splendid alliance he had in view for his son, and from Lord Mortimer's accompanying the Rosline family to Ireland.

He felt he had not fortitude to mention those conjectures to Amanda; he rather wished she should imbibe them from her own observation, and pride, he then trusted, would come to her aid, and stimulate her to overcome her attachment. Dinner passed in silence. When the servant was withdrawn, he resolved to relieve the anxiety which her looks informed him pressed upon her heart, by mentioning the visit of Lord Mortimer. He came, he told her, merely to see the state the castle was in, and thus proceeded:—
“ Lord Mortimer is, indeed, an elegant and sensible young man, and will do honour to the house from whence he is descended. He had long wished, he told me, to visit this estate, which was endeared to him by the remembrance of his juvenile days; but particularly by its being the place of his mother's nativity, and her favourite residence; and the opportunity of travelling with an agreeable party, had determined him no longer to defer gratifying this wish.

“ He

“He mentioned his mother in terms of respect and tenderness; and his softest tearful eye, proclaimed his heart the nobility; his virtues, like his praises, were to her memory. He had been told that in a very ruinous state, and was agreed to find it in as good order as could be expected on an ancient date. He desired to see the garden which had been laid out under the direction of his father, but expected not to have found a vestige remaining, and was consequently charmed to find himself mistaken: every spot appeared to him some happy hour, especially the garden. ‘How many minutes have I passed in his Lordship, after a silence for some time the best of women.’—“Upon my word,” continued Fitzalan, “you have ornated in a very fanciful manner; I really thought you would have stolen some of your little secrets, examined them so accurately.” Amanda and her father still perceiving expectation, thus went on: “His Lordship looked over the adjacent grounds; and as he has made many improvements he thought necessary to them, I fancy he will not repeat his stay much longer in the kingdom.”

In a few minutes after this conversation he repaired to his library, and Amanda followed. She hastened to the temple; never to

thought it so picturesque, or such an addition to the landscape. The silence of Lord Mortimer on entering it she did not, like her father, believe proceeded altogether from retracing scenes of former happiness with his mother: "No," said she, "in this spot he also, perhaps, thought of Amanda."

True, he had mentioned her with indifference to her father, but that might (and she would flatter herself it did) proceed from resentment, excited by her precipitate flight from Wales, at a period when his received addresses gave him a right to information about all her actions, and by her total neglect of him since. Their first interview, she trusted, would effect a reconciliation, by producing an explanation; her father then, she flattered herself, tender as he was, depending on her for happiness, and prepossessed in Lord Mortimer's favour, would no longer oppose their attachment, but allow Lord Cherbury to be informed of it, who, she doubted not, would in this, as well as every other instance, prove himself truly feeling and disinterested.

Thus did Amanda, by encouraging ideas agreeable to her wishes, try to soften the disappointment she had experienced in the morning. Fitzalan, on meeting his daughter at tea, was not surprised to hear she had been in the Gothic temple, but he was to see her wear so cheerful an appearance; he was no stranger to the human heart, and he was convinced some flattering illusion could alone have enabled her to shake
off

off the sadness with which, but an hour before, she had been oppressed. The sooner such an illusion was removed the better; and to allow her to see Lord Mortimer, he imagined would be the most effectual measure for such a purpose.

The more he reflected on that young nobleman's manner, and what he himself had heard from Lord Cherbury, the more he was convinced Lady Euphrasia Sutherland was not only the object destined for Lord Mortimer, but the one who now possessed his affections; and believed his visit to Castle Carberry had been purposely made to announce the alteration of his sentiments by the coldness of his conduct, and check any hopes which his appearance in the neighbourhood might have created.

He had hesitated about Amanda's accepting the invitation to the Kilcorban's ball, but he now determined she should go, impressed with the idea of her being there convinced of the change in Lord Mortimer's sentiments; a conviction he deemed necessary to produce one in her own.

Amanda impatiently longed for this night, which she believed would realize either her hopes or fears.

CHAP. III.

A crimson blush her beauteous face o'erspread,
 Varying her cheeks by turns with white and red;
 The driving colours, never at a stay,
 Run here and there, and flush, and fade away;
 Delightful change—thus Indian ivory shows,
 Which with the bord'ring paint of purple glows,
 Or lilies damask'd by the neighb'ring rose.

}

DRAIDEN.

THE wished-for night at length arrived, and Amanda arrayed herself for it with a fluttering heart; the reflection of her mirror did not depress her spirits; hope had encreased the brilliancy of her eyes, and given an additional glow to her complexion. Ellen, who delighted in the charms of her dear young Lady, declared, many of the Irish ladies would have reason to envy her that night; and Fitzalan, when he entered the parlour, was struck with her surpassing loveliness; he gazed on her with a rapture that brought tears into his eyes, and felt a secret pride at the idea of the Marchioness beholding this sweet descendant of her neglected sister,

Into such beauty spread, and blown so fair,
 Though poverty's cold wind, and crushing rain,
 Beat keen and heavy on her tender years.

“ No,”

“No,” said he to himself, “the titled Euphrasia, if she equals, cannot at least surpass my Amanda; meekness and innocence dwell upon the brow of my child, but the haughty Marchioness will teach pride to lower upon Lady Euphrasia.”

Amanda, on reaching Grangeville, found the avenue full of carriages; the lights dispersed through the house gave it quite the appearance of an illumination; it seemed, indeed, the mansion of gaiety and splendour. Her knees trembled as she ascended the stairs; she wished for time to compose herself, but the door opened, her name was announced, and Mrs. Kilcorban came forward to receive her. The room, though spacious, was extremely crowded; it was decorated in a fanciful manner with festoons of flowers, intermingled with variegated lamps; immediately over the entrance was the orchestra, and opposite to it sat the Marchioness and her party. The heart of Amanda beat, if possible, with increased quickness on the approach of Mrs. Kilcorban, and her voice was lost in her emotions. Recollecting, however, that the scrutinizing eyes of Lord Mortimer and her imperious relations were now on her, she almost immediately recovered composure, and with her usual elegance walked up the room. Most of the company were strangers to her, and she heard a general buzz of “Who is she?” accompanied with expressions of admiration from the gentlemen, among whom were the officers of a garrison town near Grangeville.

Grangeville. Confused by the notice she attracted, she hastened to the first seat she found vacant, which was near the Marchioness.

Universal, indeed, was the admiration she had excited among the male part of the company, by her beauty, unaffected graces, and simplicity of dress.

She wore a robe of plain white lutestring, and a crape turban, ornamented with a plume of drooping feathers; she had no appearance of finery, except a chain of pearls about her bosom, from which hung her mother's picture, and a light wreath of embroidered laurel, intermingled with silver blossoms, round her petticoat. Her hair, in its own native and glossy hue, floated on her shoulders, and partly shaded a cheek, where the purity of the lily was tinted with the softest bloom of the rose. On gaining a seat, her confusion subsided; she looked up, and the first eyes she met were those of Lord Mortimer (who leaned on Lady Euphrasia Sutherland's chair), fastened on her face with a scrutinizing earnestness, as if he wished to penetrate the recesses of her heart, and discover whether he yet retained a place in it; she blushed, and looking from him, perceived she was an object of critical attention to the Marchioness and Lady Euphrasia. There was a malignant expression on their countenances, which absolutely shocked her; and she felt a sensation of horror at beholding the former, who had so largely contributed to the sorrows of her mother. "Can it be possible," said Lady

Euphrasia, replying to a young and elegant officer who stood by her, in a tone of affectation, and with an impertinent sneer, "that you think her handsome?"—"Handsome!" exclaimed he, with warmth, as if involuntarily repeating her Ladyship's word, "I think her bewitchingly irresistible. They told me I was coming to the land of saints, but," glancing his sparkling eyes around, and fixing them on Amanda, "I find it is the land of goddesses."

The Marchioness haughtily frowned—Lady Euphrasia smiled satirically, tossed her head, and played with her fan; the propensities to envy and ill-nature, which the Marchioness had shewn in her youth were not less visible in age; as they were then excited on her own account, so were they now on her daughter's. To engross praise and admiration for her, she wished beauty blasted, and merit extirpated; nor did she ever fail, when in her power, to depreciate one, and cast an invidious cloud of calumny over the other. She beheld Amanda with envy and hatred, notwithstanding her partiality to her daughter; she could not avoid seeing her vast inferiority, in point of personal charms, to her young relation. True, Lady Euphrasia possessed a fortune which would always ensure her attention, but it was that unimpassioned and studied attention selfishness dictates, the mere tribute of flattery. How different from the spontaneous attention which Amanda excited, who, though portionless and untitled, was beheld with admiration,

miration, followed with praise, and courted with assiduity !

Lady Euphrasia's mind was the counterpart of her mother's, but in figure she resembled her father ; her stature was low, her features contracted, and though of the same age as Amanda, their harsh expression made her appear much older. Though blessed with the abundant gifts of fortune, she was unhappy, if from any one's manner she conceived that they thought nature had not been quite so liberal to her. In the domestic circle, constant flattery kept her in good humour ; but when out, she was frequently chagrined at seeing women, infinitely below her in rank and fortune, more noticed than herself.

At the ball she supposed she should have appeared as little less, at least, than a demi-goddess ; art and fashion were exhausted in adorning her, and she entered the room with all the insolence of conscious rank and affectation of beauty. As she walked, she appeared scarcely able to support her delicate frame, and her languishing eyes were half closed ; she could, however, see there was a number of pretty women present, and felt disconcerted. The respect, however, which she was paid a little revived her ; and having contrived to detain Lord Mortimer by her chair, and Sir Charles Bingley, the young officer already mentioned, who was colonel of a regiment quartered in an adjacent town ; she soon felt her spirits uncommonly exhilarated by the attentions of two of the
most

most elegant men in the room; and, like a proud Sultana in the midst of her slaves, was enjoying the compliments she extorted from them by her prefatory speeches, when the door opened, and Amanda, like an angel of light, appeared to dissolve the mists of vanity and self-importance. Lord Mortimer was silent, but his speaking eyes confessed his feelings; Sir Charles Bingley, who had no secret motive to conceal his, openly avowed his admiration, to which Lady Euphrasia replied, as has been already mentioned.

All the rapture Sir Charles expressed Lord Mortimer felt; his soul seemed on the wing to fly to Amanda, to utter its feelings, to discover her's, and chide her for her conduct. This first emotion of tenderness, however, quickly subsided, on recollecting what that conduct had been—how cruelly, how ungratefully she had used him; fled in the very moment of hope and expectation, leaving him a prey to distrust, anxiety, and regret. He dreaded some fatal mystery, some improper attachment (experience had rendered him suspicious), which neither she nor her father could avow; for never did he imagine that the scrupulous delicacy of Fitzalan alone had effected their separation. He still adored Amanda; he neither could or desired to drive her from his thoughts, except well assured she was unworthy of being harboured in them, and felt unutterable impatience to have her mysterious conduct explained. From Tudor Hall he had repaired to London, restless and unhappy.

Soon after his arrival there, the Marquis proposed his accompanying him to Ireland; this he declined, having reason to think Lord Cherbury meditated an alliance for him with his family. The Earl expressed regret at his refusal; he said he wished he would join the Marquis's party, as he wanted his opinion relative to the state of Castle Carberry, where a man of integrity then resided, who would have any alterations or repairs he might think necessary executed in the most eligible manner. He mentioned the name of Fitzalan. Lord Mortimer was surprised and agitated; he concealed his emotions, however, and with apparent carelessness asked a few questions about him, and found that he was indeed the father of Amanda: She was not mentioned, nor did he dare to enquire concerning her; but he immediately declared, that, since his father wished it so much, he would accompany the Marquis. This was extremely pleasing to that Nobleman, and he and Lord Cherbury had in reality agreed upon an union between him and Lady Euphrasia, and meant soon openly to avow their intention. Lord Mortimer suspected, and Lady Euphrasia was already apprised of it, and, from vanity, was pleased at the idea of being connected with a man so universally admired. Love was out of the question, for she had not sufficient sensibility to experience it.

He, cautious of creating hopes, which he never meant to realize, treated her only with the attention
which

which common politeness demanded, and on every occasion seemed to prefer the Marchioness's conversation to her's, intending, by this conduct, to crush the projected scheme in embryo, and spare himself the mortification of openly rejecting it. Had his heart even been disengaged, Lady Euphrasia could never have been his choice; if Amanda, in reality, proved as amiable as he had once reason to believe her, he considered himself bound, by every tie of honour as well as love, to fulfil the engagement he had entered into with her. He resolved, however, to resist every plea of tenderness in her favour, except he was thoroughly convinced she still deserved it. He went to Castle Carberry, purposely to make a display of indifference, and prevent any ideas being entertained of his having followed her to Ireland; he deemed himself justifiable in touching her sensibility (if indeed she possessed any for him), by an appearance of coldness and inattention; but determined, after a little retaliation of this kind on her, for the pain she had made him endure, to come to an explanation, and be guided by its result, relative to his conduct in future to her.

The character of a perfect stranger was the one he was to support throughout the evening; but her loveliness, and the gallantry of Sir Charles Bingley, tempted him a thousand times to break through the restraint he had imposed on himself.

The Marchioness and Lady Euphrasia were not the only persons displeased by the charms of Amanda;

the Miss Kilcorbans saw, with evident mortification, the admiration she excited, which they had flattered themselves with chiefly engrossing; their disappointment was doubly severe, after the pain, trouble, and expence they had undergone in ornamenting their persons. After the suggestions of their vanity, and the flattering encomiums of their mama, who presided herself at their toilet, every moment exclaiming, "Well, well, Heaven help the men to-night, girls."

They fluttered across the room to Amanda, sweeping at least two yards of painted tiffany after them; assured her they were extremely glad to see her, but were afraid she was unwell, as she never looked so ill. Amanda assured them she was conscious of no indisposition, and the harmony of her features remained undisturbed. Miss Kilcorban, in a half whisper, declared the Marchioness had never smiled since she had entered the room, and feared her mama had committed a great mistake in inviting them together. The rudeness of this speech shocked Amanda; an indignant swell heaved her bosom, and she was about replying to it as it deserved, when Miss Alicia stopped her, by protesting she believed Lord Mortimer dying for Lady Euphrasia. Amanda involuntarily raised her eyes at this speech, but instead of Lord Mortimer, beheld Sir Charles Bingley, who was standing behind the young ladies. "Am I pardonable?" cried he, smiling, "for disturbing so charming a
trio;

trio; but a soldier is taught never to neglect a good opportunity; and one so propitious as the present for the wish of my heart might not again offer."—The Miss Kilcorbans bridled up at this speech, played their fans, and smiled most graciously on him, certainly concluding he meant to engage one or other for the first set. Passing gently between them, he bowed gracefully to Amanda, and requested the honour of her hand; she gave an assenting smile, and he seated himself beside her till the dancing commenced; the sisters cast a malignant glance over them, and swam off with a contemptuous indifference.

Lady Euphrasia had expected Sir Charles and Lord Mortimer would have been competitors for her hand, and was infinitely provoked by the desertion of the former to her lovely cousin; he was a fashionable and animated young man, whom she had often honoured with her notice in England, and wished to enlist in the train of her supposed adorers. Lord Mortimer could scarcely restore her good humour by engaging her. Almost immediately after him, young Kilcorban advanced for the same purpose, and Lord Mortimer sincerely regretted he had been before hand with him. The little fop was quite chagrined at finding her Ladyship engaged, but entreated the next set he might have the supreme honour and ecstatic felicity of her hand: this, with the most impertinent attestation, she promised, if able to endure the fatigue of another dance.

Amanda was next couple to Lady Euphrasia, and endeavoured, therefore, to calm her spirits, which the rudeness of Miss Kilcorban had discomposed, and attend to the lively conversation of Sir Charles, who was extremely pleasing and entertaining. Lord Mortimer watched them with jealous attention; his wandering glances were soon noticed by Lady Euphrasia, and her frowns and sarcastic speeches evinced her displeasure at them. He tried to recollect himself, and act as politeness required; she, not satisfied with fixing his attention, endeavoured to attract Sir Charles's. She spoke to him across Amanda, but all her efforts were here ineffectual; he spoke and laughed with her Ladyship, but his eyes could not be withdrawn from the angelic countenance of his partner. Amanda's hand trembled, as, in turning, she presented it to Lord Mortimer; but though he extended his, he did not touch it. There was a slight in this, which pierced Amanda's heart; she sighed, unconscious of doing so herself;—not so Sir Charles; he asked her, smiling, to where or whom that sigh was wafted? This made Amanda recal her wandering thoughts; she assumed an air of sprightliness, and went down the dance with much animation. When finished, Sir Charles led her to a seat near the one Lady Euphrasia and Lord Mortimer occupied; she saw the eyes of his Lordship often directed towards her, and her heart fluttered at the pleasing probability of being asked to dance by him. Sir Charles re-
gretted

gretted that the old-fashioned custom of not changing partners was over, and declared he could not leave her till she had promised him her hand for the third set: this she could not refuse, and he left her with reluctance, as the gentlemen were again standing up, to seek a partner. At the same moment Lord Mortimer quitted Lady Euphrasia. Oh how the bosom of Amanda throbbed when she saw him approach and look at her! He paused; a faintishness came over her; he cast another glance on her, and passed on;—her eye followed him, and she saw him take out Miss Kilcorban.

This, indeed, was a disappointment; propriety, she thought, demanded his dancing the first set with Lady Euphrasia; but if not totally indifferent, surely he would not have neglected engaging her for the second. "Yes," said she to herself, "he has totally forgotten me; Lady Euphrasia is now the object, and he only pays attention to those who can contribute to her amusement." Several gentlemen endeavoured to prevail on her to dance, but she pleaded fatigue, and sat solitary in a window, apparently regarding the gay assembly, but, in reality, too much engrossed by painful thoughts to do so. The woods, silvered by the beams of the moon, recalled the venerable shades of Tudor Hall to memory, where she had so often rambled by the same pale beams, and heard vows of unchangeable regard—vows registered in her heart, yet now without the hope of having them fulfilled.

filled. The dancing over, the company repaired to another room for refreshments. Amanda, absorbed in thought, heeded not their almost total desertion, 'till young Kilcorban, capering up to her, declared she looked as lonesome as a hermit in his cell, and laughing in her face, turned off with a careless impertinence. He had not noticed her before that night; he was indeed one of those little fluttering insects, who bask in the rays of fortune, and court alone her favourites; elated by an acquaintance with the Marchioness and Lady Euphrasia, he particularly neglected Amanda, not only from deeming them more worthy of his attention, but from perceiving he could take no step more certain of gaining their favour. His words made Amanda sensible of the singularity of her situation; she arose immediately, and went to the other room. Every seat was already occupied; near the door sat Lady Euphrasia and Miss Kilcorban; Lord Mortimer leaned on the back of her Ladyship's chair, and young Kilcorban occupied one by her side, which he never attempted offering to Amanda; she stood, therefore, most unpleasantly by the door, and was exceedingly confused at hearing a great many, in a whispering way, remarking the strangeness of her not being noticed by so near a relation as the Marchioness of Rosline. A general titter at her situation prevailed among Lady Euphrasia's party, Lord Mortimer excepted. "Upon my word," said young Kilcorban, looking at Amanda, "some ladies study

study attitudes, which would be as well let alone.”—
“For the study of propriety,” replied her Ladyship, who appeared to have unbended from her haughtiness, “she would do admirably for the figure of Hope.”—“If she had but an anchor to recline on,” rejoined he.—“Yes,” answered her Ladyship, with her floating locks and die-away glances.”—“Or else Patience on a monument,” cried he.—“Only she has no Grief here to smile at,” returned Lady Euphrasia. “Pardon me there,” said he, “she has the grief (not indeed that I believe she would smile at it, of being totally eclipsed by your Ladyship.”

“Or what do you think,” cried Lord Mortimer, whose eyes sparkled with indignation during this dialogue, “of likening her to Wisdom, pitying the follies of human kind, and smiling to see the shafts of malice recoiling from the bosom of innocence and modesty with contempt on those who levelled them at it.”

Amanda heard not these words, which were delivered in rather a low voice; her heart swelled with indignation at the impertinence directed to her; and she would have quitted the room, but that the passage was too much crowded for her to pass. Sir Charles Bingley, occupied in attending the young Lady with whom he had danced, observed not Amanda till this moment; he instantly flew to her—“Alone, and standing?” said he, “why did I not see you before? you look fatigued.” She was pale with emotion.

"Kilcorban," continued he, "I must suppose **you** did not see Miss Fitzalan, or your seat would not **have** been kept." Then catching him by the arm, **he** raised him nimbly from his chair, and directly carried it to Amanda; and having procured her refreshments, seated himself at her feet, exclaiming, "This is **my** throne, let kings come bow to it!" Her lovely and unaffected graces had excited Sir Charles's admiration; but it was the neglect with which he saw her treated diffused such a soothing tenderness through his **man-**ner as he now displayed: it hurt his sensibility; and had she even been plain in her appearance, would have rendered her the peculiar object of his attention; he detested the Marchioness and her daughter for their rancorous envy, as much as he despised the Kilcorbans for their mean insolence. The Marchioness told him a long tale of the shocking conduct of Amanda's parents, whose ill qualities she declared her looks announced her to possess, and endeavoured to depreciate her in his favour; but that was impossible.

"Lord!" said Lady Euphrasia, rising as she spoke, "let me pass—this scene is sickening." Lord Mortimer remained behind her; he loitered about the room, and his looks were often directed towards Amanda. Her hopes began to revive; the lustre rekindled in her eyes, and a soft blush again stole over her cheek; though engaged to Sir Charles, she felt she should be pleased to have Lord Mortimer make an overture for her hand. The company were now re-
turning

turning to the ball-room, and Sir Charles took her hand to lead her after them. At that moment Lord Mortimer approached; Amanda paused, as if to adjust some part of her dress; he passed on to a very beautiful girl, whom he immediately engaged, and fled from the room; she followed them with her eyes, and continued without moving, till the fervent pressure Sir Charles gave her hand restored her to recollection.

When the set with him was finished, she would have left the house directly, had her servant been there; but after putting up the horses, he had returned to Castle Carberry, and she did not expect him till a very late hour. She declared her resolution of dancing no more; and Sir Charles having avowed the same, they repaired to the card-room, as the least crowded place they could find. Lady Greystock was playing at the table with the Marquis and Marchioness; she beckoned Amanda to her, and having had no opportunity of speaking before, expressed her pleasure at then seeing her. The Marquis examined her through his spectacles; the Marchioness frowned, and declared she would take care in future to avoid parties subject to such disagreeable intruders. This speech was too pointed not to be remarked; Amanda wished to appear undisturbed, but her emotions grew too powerful to be suppressed, and she was obliged to move hastily from the table. Sir Charles followed her. "Cursed malignity!" cried he;

endeavouring to screen her from observation, while tears trickled down her cheeks. "But my dear Miss Fitzalan, was your beauty and merit less conspicuous, you would have escaped it; 'tis the vice of little minds to hate that excellence they cannot reach."—"It is cruel, it is shocking," said Amanda, "to suffer enmity to outlive the object who excited it, and to hate the offspring on account of the parent; the original of this picture (and she looked at her mother's) merited not such conduct."—Sir Charles gazed on it; it was wet with the tears of Amanda; he wiped them off, and pressing the handkerchief to his lips, put it in his bosom.

At this instant Lord Mortimer appeared; he had, indeed, been for some time an unnoticed observer of the progress of this *tête-à-tête*. As soon as he perceived he had attracted their regard, he quitted the room.

"His Lordship is like a troubled spirit to-night, wandering to and fro," said Sir Charles; "I really believe every thing is not right between him and Lady Euphrasia."—"Something, then," cried Amanda, "is in agitation between him and her Ladyship."—"So says the world," replied Sir Charles, "but I do not always give implicit credit to its reports. I have known Lord Mortimer this long time; and from my knowledge of him, should never have supposed Lady Euphrasia Sutherland a woman capable of pleasing him; nay, to give my real opinion, I think him quite uninterested.

uninterested about her Ladyship. I will not say so much as to all the other females present; I really imagined several times to-night, from his glances to you, he was on the point of requesting an introduction, which would not have pleased me perfectly. Mortimer possesses more graces than those which merely meet the eye, and is a rival I should by no means like to have."

Amanda, confused by this discourse, endeavoured to change it, and at last succeeded; they conversed pleasantly together on different subjects till they went to supper, when Sir Charles still continued his attention. Lord Mortimer was, or at least appeared to be, entirely engrossed with Lady Euphrasia, who, from time to time, tittered with the Miss Kilcorbans, and looked satirically at Amanda. On quitting the supper-room, she found her servant in the hall, and immediately desired him to have the carriage drawn up. Sir Charles, who held her hand, requested her to stay a little longer, yet acknowledged it was self alone which dictated the request, as he knew she would not promote her own pleasure by complying with it. As he handed her into the carriage, he told her he should soon follow her example in retiring, as the scene, so lately delightful, in losing her, would lose all its charms; he entreated and obtained permission to wait on her the next morning.

How different was now the appearance of Amanda to what it had been at her departure from Castle

Carberry!

Carberry! Pale, trembling, and languid, her father received her into his arms; for, till she returned, he could not think of going to rest, and instantly guessed the cause of her dejection. His heart mourned for the pangs inflicted on his child's. When she beheld him gazing on her with mingled woe and tenderness, she tried to recruit her spirits; and after relating a few particulars of the ball, answered the minute-enquiries he made relative to the conduct of the Marchioness and Lady Euphrasia. He appeared unutterably affected on hearing it. "Merciful Power!" exclaimed he, "what dispositions! but you are too lovely, too like your mother, my Amanda, in every perfection, to escape their malice. Oh may it never injure you as it did her! may that Providence, whose protection I daily implore for the sweet child of my love, the source of earthly comfort, render every wish, every scheme which may be formed against her, abortive; and oh! may it yet bless me with the sight of her happiness!"

Amanda retired to her chamber, inexpressibly affected by the language of her father.—"Yes," cried she, her heart swelling with pity and gratitude to him, "my sorrow in future shall be concealed, to avoid exciting his; the pain inflicted by thy inconstancy, Mortimer, shall be hid within the recesses of my heart, and never shall the peace of my father be disturbed by knowing the loss of mine."

The

The grey dawn was now beginning to advance, but Amanda had no inclination for repose; as she stood at the window, she heard the solemn stillness of the scene frequently interrupted by the distant noise of carriages, carrying home the weary sons and daughters of dissipation. "But a few hours ago," said she, "and how gay, how animated was my soul; how dull, how cheerless now. Oh Mortimer! but a few hours ago, and I believed myself the beloved of thine heart; but the flattering illusion is now over, and I no longer shall hope, or thou deceive." She changed her clothes, and flinging herself on the bed, from mere fatigue at length sunk into a slumber.

CHAP. IV.

Love reigns a very tyrant in my heart,
Attended on his throne by all his guard
Of furious wishes, fears, and nice suspicions.

OTWAY.

THE next morning brought Sir Charles Bingley to Castle Carberry; Fitzalan was out, but Amanda received him in her dressing-room. He told her, with evident concern, he was on the point of setting off for the metropolis, to embark from thence immediately for England, having received letters that morning, which recalled him there. He regretted that their intimacy, or rather friendship, as with insinuating softness he entreated permission to call it, was interrupted at its very commencement; declared it gave him more pain than she could imagine, or he express, and that his return to Ireland would be expedited for the purpose of renewing it; and requested he might be flattered with an assurance of not being totally forgotten during his absence. Amanda answered him as if the supposed mere politeness had dictated the request; her father, she said, she was sure would be happy to see him, if he returned again to their neighbourhood.

bourhood. At his entrance, he said he could stay but a few minutes, yet he remained about two hours; and when he arose to depart, declared he had reason to think the castle an enchanted one; he found it difficult to get from it, "Yet unlike the Knights of old," continued he, "I wish not to break the spell which detained me in it."

Day after day elapsed, and no Lord Mortimer appeared. Amanda, indeed, heard frequently of him, and always as the admirer of Lady Euphrasia; frequently, too, she heard about the family at Ulster Lodge; their superb entertainments, and those given in the neighbourhood to them. The Kilcorbans seemed to have given her up entirely; Lady Greystock was the only one of the family who continued to pay her any attention; she called once or twice at Castle Carberry, to see whether her apron was finished, and tell all the news she had picked up to Amanda. The resolution which Amanda had formed, of concealing her melancholy from her father, she supported tolerably well, but she only indulged it more freely in solitude; the idea of Lord Mortimer's union with Lady Euphrasia haunted her imagination, and embittered every moment. "Yes," she would exclaim, as she wandered through the garden, which had been converted from a rude wilderness into a scene of beauty by her superintending care, "I have planted flowers, but another shall enjoy their sweets; I have planted roses for Mortimer to strew in the path of
Lady

Lady Euphrasia; I have adorned the landscape, and she shall enjoy its beauty."

About three weeks after the ball, as she sat at work one morning in the dressing-room, beguiling her thoughts with a little plaintive song, she heard the door softly open behind her: she supposed it to be Ellen; but not finding any one advance, turned round, and perceived not Ellen indeed, but Lord Mortimer himself. She started from her chair; the work dropped from her hands, and she had neither power to speak or move.

"I fear I have surprised and alarmed you," said Lord Mortimer. "I ask pardon for my intrusion, but I was informed I should find Mr. Fitzalan here."

"He is in the study, I believe, my Lord," replied Amanda, coolly, and with restored composure; "I will go and inform him your Lordship wishes to see him."

"No," exclaimed he, "I will not suffer you to have so much trouble; my business is not so urgent as to require my seeing him immediately." He re-seated Amanda, and drew a chair near her.

She pretended to be busied with her work, whilst the eyes of Lord Mortimer were cast round the room, as if viewing well-known objects, which at once pleased and pained his sensibility, by awakening the memory of past delightful days. "This room," said he, softly sighing, "I well remember; it was the favourite
favourite

favourite retirement of one of the most amiable of women."

"So I have heard," replied Amanda; "the virtues of Lady Cherbury are remembered with the truest gratitude by many in the vicinity of the castle."

"I think," cried Lord Mortimer, gazing upon Amanda with the softest tenderness, "the apartment is still occupied by a kindred spirit."

Amanda's eyes were instantly bent on the ground, and a gentle sigh heaved her bosom; but it was rather the sigh of regret than pleasure. With such an accent as this Lord Mortimer was wont to address her at Tudor Hall, but she had now reason to think it only assumed, for the purpose of discovering whether she yet retained any sensibility for him. Had he not treated her with the most pointed neglect? was he not the declared admirer of Lady Euphrasia? had he not confessed, on entering the room, he came to seek not her, but her father? These ideas rushing through her mind, determined her to continue no longer with him: delicacy, as well as pride, urged her to this; for she feared, if she longer listened to his insinuating language, it might lead her to betray the feelings of her heart; she therefore arose, and said she would acquaint her father his Lordship waited for him.

"Cold, insensible Amanda," cried he, snatching her hand to prevent her departing, "Is it thus you leave me? When we parted in Wales, I could not
have

have believed we should ever have had such a meeting as this."

"Perhaps not, my Lord," replied she, somewhat haughtily, "but we have both thought more prudently since that period."

"Then why," said he, "did not prudence teach you to shun a conduct which would create suspicion?"

"Suspicion, my Lord!" repeated Amanda, with a kind of horror in her look.

"Pardon me," cried he, "the word is disagreeable; but Miss Fitzalan, when you reflect on the manner in which you have acted to me,—your precipitate, your clandestine departure, at the very period when a mutual acknowledgment of reciprocal feelings should have been attended with the most explicit candour on both sides, you cannot wonder at unpleasant conjectures and tormenting doubts obtruding on my mind."

"Is it possible, my Lord," said Amanda, "you never conceived the reason of my departure? Is it possible reflection never pointed it out?"

"Never, I solemnly assure you; nor shall I be happy till I know it." He paused, as if for a reply; but Amanda, agitated by his words, had not power to speak. Whilst she stood silent, trembling, and apparently embarrassed, she heard her father's voice as he ascended the stairs. This instantly restored her's. "I must go, my Lord," cried she, starting and

and struggling to withdraw her hand. " Promise then to meet me," he said, " this evening at St. Catherine's by seven, or I will not let you go. My soul will be in tortures till I have your actions explained."—" I do promise," said Amanda. Lord Mortimer released her, and she retired into her chamber just time enough to avoid her father.

Again her hopes began to revive ; again she believed she was not mistaken in supposing Lord Mortimer had come into Ireland on her account. His being mentioned as the admirer of Lady Euphrasia, she supposed owing to his being a resident in the house with her. About herself had he been indifferent, he never could have betrayed such emotions ; his looks, as well as language, expressed the feelings of a heart tenderly attached and truly distressed. Least any circumstance had happened which would prevent a renewal of that attachment, she felt as much impatience as he manifested to give the desired explanation of her conduct.

His Lordship was scarcely gone ere Lady Greystock made her appearance. Amanda supposed, as usual, she only came to pay a flying visit ; how great then was her mortification and surprise, when her Ladyship told her she was come to spend the day quite in the family way with her, as the ladies of Grangeville were so busy preparing for a splendid entertainment they were to be at the ensuing day, that they had excluded

excluded all visitors, and rendered the house quite disagreeable.

Amanda endeavoured to appear pleased, but to converse she found almost impossible, her thoughts were so engrossed by an absent object. Happily her Ladyship was so very loquacious herself as at all times to require a listener more than a speaker; she was therefore well satisfied with the taciturnity of her fair companion. Amanda tried to derive some comfort from the hope that her Ladyship would depart early in the evening, to which she flattered herself she would be induced by the idea of a comfortable whist party at home; but six o'clock struck, and she manifested no inclination to move. Amanda was in agony; her cheek was flushed with agitation; she rose and walked to the window to conceal her emotion, whilst her father and Lady Greystock were conversing; the former at last said he had some letters to write, and begged her Ladyship to excuse his absence for a few minutes. This she most graciously promised to do, and pulling out her knotting, requested Amanda to read to her till tea-time. Amanda took up a book, but was so confused, she scarcely knew what or how she read.

"Softly, softly, my dear child," at last exclaimed her Ladyship, whose attention could by no means keep pace with the rapid manner in which she read. "I protest you go on with as much expedition as my Lady Blerner's poneys on the circular." Amanda blushed,

blushed, and began to read slowly; but when the clock struck seven, her feelings could no longer be repressed. "Good Heaven!" cried she, letting the book drop from her hand, and starting from her chair, "this is too much."—"Bless me, my dear," said Lady Greystock, staring at her, "what is the matter?"—"Only a slight head-ach, Madam," answered Amanda, continuing to walk about the room.

Her busy fancy represented Lord Mortimer now impatiently waiting for her, thinking, in every sound which echoed among the desolate ruins of St. Catherine's, he heard her footsteps; his soul melting with tenderness at the idea of a perfect reconciliation, which an unsatisfied doubt only retarded. What would he infer from her not keeping an appointment so ardently desired, so solemnly promised, but that she was unable to remove that doubt to his satisfaction? Perhaps he would not credit the reason she could assign for breaking her engagement? Perhaps, piqued at her doing so, he would not afford her an opportunity of accounting for it, or the apparent mystery of her late conduct? To retain his doubts would be to lose his tenderness, and at last perhaps expel her from his heart. She thought of sending Ellen to acquaint him with the occasion of her detention at home; but this idea existed but for a moment: an appointment she concealed from her father she could not bear to divulge to any other person; it would be a breach of duty

duty and delicacy she thought. "No," said she to herself, "I will not, from the thoughtlessness and impetuosity which lead so many of my sex astray, overstep the bounds of propriety, and to reinstate myself in the esteem of one person lose that of others, and, above all, that of my own heart. If Lord Mortimer refuses to hear my justification, he will act neither agreeable to candour or justice, and pride must aid in repelling my regret."

"You look strangely indeed, my dear," said Lady Greystock, who was attentively watching her whilst those ideas were rising in her mind. Amanda recollected the remarks which might be made on her behaviour, and apologizing for the manner in which she had acted, took her seat with some degree of composure. Fitzalan soon after entered the room, and tea was made; when over, Lady Greystock declared they were a snug party for three-handed whist. Amanda would gladly have excused herself from being of the party, but politeness made her conceal her reluctance; but extreme dejection was noticed both by Fitzalan and her Ladyship. The latter imputed it to regret, at not being permitted by her father to accept an invitation she had received for a ball the ensuing evening.

"Don't fret about it, my dear creature," said she, laying down her cards, to administer the consolation she supposed Amanda required; "'tis not by frequenting balls and public places a girl always stands
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the best chance of being provided for ; I, for my part, have been married three times, yet never made a conquest of any one of my husbands in a public place ; no, it was the privacy of my life partly obtained for me so many proofs of good fortune." Fitzalan and Amanda laughed. " I shall never be dissatisfied with staying at home," said the latter, though without either expecting or desiring to have my retirement recompensed as your Ladyship's was."

" One prize will satisfy you, then," said Fitzalan. " Ah !" cried Lady Greystock, " it is Lady Euphrasia Sutherland will obtain the capital one ; I don't know where such another young man as Lord Mortimer is to be found."—" Then your Ladyship supposes," said Fitzalan, " there is some truth in the reports circulated relative to him and Lady Euphrasia." " I assure you there is," said she, " and I think the connection will be a very eligible one ; their births, their fortunes are equal."—" But ah !" thought Amanda, " how unlike their dispositions."—" I dare say," proceeded her Ladyship, " Lady Euphrasia will have changed her title before this time next year."

Fitzalan glanced at Amanda ; her face was deadly pale, and she put him and Lady Greystock out in the game by the errors she committed. At last the carriage from Grangeville arrived, and broke up a party Amanda could not much longer have supported. Her father perceived the painful efforts she made to conceal her distress ; he pitied her from his soul, and pre-

tending to think she was only indisposed, entreated her to retire to her chamber. Amanda gladly complied with this entreaty, and began to meditate on what Greystock had said. Was there not a probability of its being true? Might not the indifference Lord Mortimer had manifested on his first arrival in the neighbourhood have really originated from a change of affections? Might not the tenderness he displayed in the morning have been concerted with the hope of its inducing her to gratify his curiosity, by relating the reason of her journey from Wales, or please his vanity by tempting her to give some proof of attachment? But she soon receded from this idea. Lady Greystock was not infallible in her judgment; report of approaching nuptials Amanda knew had often been raised without any foundation for them; the present report, relative to Lord Mortimer and Lady Euphrasia, might be one of that nature; she could not believe him so egregiously vain, or so deliberately base, as to counterfeit tenderness merely for the purpose of having his curiosity or vanity gratified. She felt, however, truly unhappy, and could derive no consolation but from the hope that her suspense, at least, would soon be terminated.

She passed a restless night, nor was her morning more composed; she could not settle to any of her usual avocations; every step she heard, she started, in expectation of instantly seeing Lord Mortimer, but he did not appear. After dinner she walked out alone,

alone, and took the road to St. Catherine's. When she reached the ruins, she felt fatigued, and sat down upon a flag in the chapel to rest herself. "Here," said she, pensively leaning her head upon her hand, "Mortimer waited for me, perhaps with tender impatience; here, too, he perhaps accused me of neglect or deceit." She heard a rustling behind her, and turning, perceived Sister Mary.

"You are welcome, my dear soul," cried the good-natured Nun, running forward, and sitting down by her; "but why did you not come in to see us?" continued she, affectionately kissing her. Amanda said, such was her intention, but feeling a little indisposed, she had remained in the air, in hopes of growing better.

"Oh Jesu!" cried the sister, "you do indeed look ill, I must go and get you a cordial from our Priorefs, who is quite a doctress, I assure you."

Amanda caught her gown as she was running away, and assured her she was better.

"Well, then," said she, resuming her seat, "I must tell you of an odd thing which happened here last night. I came out to walk about the ruins between the lights; that is, as one may say, when it is neither dark or light. As the air was cold, I wrapped my veil about me, and had just turned the cloisters, when I heard a quick foot pacing after me; well, I supposing it to be one of the sisters, walked slowly, that she might easily overtake me; but you may guess my
D 2 surprise,

surprise, when I was overtaken, not by one of them; indeed, but by one of the finest and most beautiful young men I ever beheld. Lord how he did start when he saw me! just for all the world as if I was a ghost! he looked quite wild, and flew off muttering something to himself. Well, I thought all this strange, and was making all the haste I could to the Convent, when he appeared again, coming from under that broken arch; and he bowed and smiled so sweetly, and held his hat in his hand so respectfully, whilst he begged my pardon for the alarm he had given me; and then he blushed and strove to hide his confusion with his handkerchief, while he asked me if I had seen e'er a young lady about the ruins that evening, as a particular friend had informed him she would be there, and desired him to escort her home."

"Why, my dear Sir," says I, "I have been about this place the whole evening, and here has neither been man, woman, nor child, but you and myself; so the young lady changed her mind, and took another ramble."—"So I suppose," said he; and he looked so pale, and so melancholy, I could not help thinking it was a sweetheart he had been seeking; so by way of giving him a bit of comfort, "Sir," says I, "if you will leave any marks of the young lady you were seeking with me, I will watch here myself a little longer for her; and if she comes, I will tell her how uneasy you were at not finding her, and
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be sure to dispatch her after you."—"No, he thanked me," he said, "but it was of very little consequence his not meeting her, or, indeed, whether he ever met her again," and went away.

"Did he!" said Amanda.

"Bless me!" exclaimed the Nun, "you are worse instead of better."

Amanda acknowledged she was, and rising, requested she would excuse her not paying her compliments that evening at the Nunnery.

Sister Mary pressed her to drink tea with the Prioress, or at least take some of her excellent cordial; but Amanda refused both requests, and the affectionate Nun saw her depart with reluctance.

Scarcely had she regained the road, ere a coach and six, preceded and followed by a number of attendants, approached with such quickness, that she was obliged to step aside to avoid it. Looking in at the window as it passed, she saw Lord Mortimer and Lady Euphrasia seated in it, opposite to each other; she saw they both perceived her, and that Lady Euphrasia laughed, and put her head forward to stare impertinently at her. Amanda was mortified that they had seen her; there was something at that moment humiliating in the contrast between their situation and her's: she, dejected and solitary; they, adorned and attended with all the advantages of fortune. "But, in the estimation of a liberal mind,"

cried she, "the want of such advantages can never lessen me—such a mind as I flatter myself Lord Mortimer possesses. Ah! if he thinks as I do, he would prefer a lonely ramble in the desolate spot I have just quitted, to all the parade and magnificence he is about witnessing." The night passed heavily away; the idea of Lord Mortimer's devoting all his attention to Lady Euphrasia could not be driven from her mind.

The next morning, the first object she saw, on going to the window, was a large frigate lying at anchor near the castle. Ellen entered her chamber, and sighing heavily, as she always did indeed at the sight of a ship, said, she wished it contained her wandering sailor. Amanda indulged a hope that Lord Mortimer would appear in the course of the day, but she was disappointed. She retired after tea in the evening to her dressing-room, and seated in the window, enjoyed a calm and beautiful scene; not a cloud concealed the bright azure of the firmament; the moon spread a line of silvery radiance over the waves, that stole with a melancholy murmur upon the shore; and the silence which reigned around was only interrupted by the faint noise of the mariners on board the frigate, and their evening drum. At last Amanda heard the paddling of oars, and perceived a large boat coming from the ship, rowed by sailors in white shirts and trowsers, their voices keeping time to their oars.

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The appearance they made was picturesque, and Amanda watched them till the boat disappeared among the rocks. The supper-bell soon after summoned her from the window; but scarcely had she retired to her chamber for the night, ere Ellen, smiling, trembling, and apparently overcome with joy, appeared.

“I have seen him!” cried she, hastily—“Oh, Madam! I have seen poor Chip himself, and he is as kind and as true-hearted as ever. I went this evening to the village to see old Norah, to whom you sent the linen, for she is a pleasing kind of poty, and does not laugh like the rest at one for their Welch tongue; so when I was returning home, and at a good distance from her cabin, I saw a great number of men coming towards me, all dressed in white; to be sure, as I heard a great deal about the white boys, I thought these were nothing else; and I did so quake and tremble, for there was neither hole, or bush, or tree on the spot that would have sheltered one of the little tiny farries of Penmaenmawr. Well, they came on, shouting and laughing, and merrier than I thought such rogues ought to be; and the moment they espied me, they gathered round me, and began pulling me about, so I gave a great scream, and directly a voice (Lort how my heart jumped at it) cried out, “That is Ellen!” and, to be sure, poor Chip soon had me in his arms; and then I heard they were sailors from the frigate, come to get fresh provisions at the
D 4 village;

village; so I turned pack with them, and they had a great bowl of whiskey punch, and a whole fight of cakes, and Chip told me all his adventures; and he was so glad when he heard I lived with you, because he said you were a sweet, mild young Lady, and he was sure you would sometimes remind me of him; and he hopes soon to get his discharge, and then——”

“ You are to be married,” said Amanda, interpreting the blushes and hesitation of Ellen.

“ Yes, Matam; and I assure you Chip is not altered for the worse by a sea-faring life: his voice, indeed, is a little of the roughest, but he told me that was owing to his learning the poatswain’s whistle. Poor fellow! he sails to-morrow night; the ship is on the Irish station, and they are to coast it to Dublin.”

“ Happy Ellen!” said Amanda, as she retired from her chamber, “ thy perturbations and inquietudes are over, assured of the affections of thy village swain; peace and cheerfulness will resume their empire in thy breast.”

The next evening, at twilight, Amanda went down to the beach with her father, to see the fishermen drawing their seines on shore, on which their hopes and the comfort of their families depended. Whilst Fitzalan conversed with them, Amanda seated herself on a low rock to observe their motions; in the murmur of the waves there was a gentle melancholy, in unison with her present feelings. From a pensive meditation,

dition, which had gradually rendered her inattentive to the scene before her, she was suddenly roused by voices behind her; she started from her seat, for in one of them she imagined she distinguished the accent of Lord Mortimer: nor was she mistaken; he was descending a winding-path near her, accompanied by a naval officer. To pass without seeing her was impossible; and as he approached her, he stopped, apparently hesitating whether or not he should address her. In a few minutes his hesitation ended, with waving his handkerchief, as if to bid her adieu, whilst he proceeded to a small boat, which had been for some time lying in a creek among the rocks, and which, on receiving him and his companion, immediately rowed to the frigate. Amanda trembled; her heart beat violently. Ellen had informed her the frigate was to sail that night; and what could induce Lord Mortimer to visit it at such an hour, except an intention of departing in it.

Uncertainty is dreadful; she grew sick with anxiety before her father returned to the castle. On entering it, she immediately repaired to her chamber, and calling Ellen hastily, demanded if Chip's intelligence was true?

"Alas! yes," replied Ellen, weeping violently, "and I know the reason you inquire. You saw Lord Mortimer going to the ship; I saw him myself as I stood on the beach talking to Chip, who was one of the sailors that came in the boat for his Lordship-

and the captain; and, to be sure, the fight left my eyes when I saw my Lord departing, because I knew he was going away in anger at the treatment he supposed he received from you."

"From me!" exclaimed Amanda.

"Oh, you will never forgive me for acting so badly as I have done by you!" sobbed Ellen, "put indeed the sight of poor Chip drove every thing from my memory put himself. Last night, as I was going to Norah's, I overtook Lord Mortimer on the road, who was walking quite sorrowfully, as I may say, by himself; so, to be sure, I thought I could do no less, in good manners, than drop him a curtsy as I past; so up he came to me directly—'And, my good girl, how are you?' said he; and he smiled so sweetly, and looked so handsome; and then he took my hand, and, to be sure, his hand was as soft as any velvet.—'And pray, Ellen,' said he, 'is Miss Fitzalan at home, and disengaged.'—I told him you was, and, Cot knows, my Lord," says I, "and melancholy enough too. I left her in the dressing-room window, looking out at the waves, and listening to the winds.—'Well, hasten home,' cried he, 'and tell her she will oblige me greatly by meeting me immediately at the rocks beyond the castle.'—I promised him I would, and he put—nay, indeed, forced five guineas into my hand, and turned off another road, charging me not to forget; put as I was so near Norah's, I thought I might just step in to see how she did; and
when

when I left her, I met poor Chip, and, Lort knows, I am afraid he would have made me forget my own teer father and mother."

"Oh Ellen!" cried Amanda, "how could you serve me so?"

"Oh tear," said Ellen, redoubling her tears, "I am certainly one of the most unfortunate girls in the world; put, Lort, now Miss Amanda, why should you be so sorrowful; for certain my Lort loves you too well always to be angry; there is poor Chip now, though he thought I loved Parson Howell, he never forgot me."

Ellen's efforts at consolation were not successful, and Amanda dismissed her, that, unnoticed and unrestrained, she might indulge the tears which flowed at the idea of a long, a lasting separation, perhaps, from Lord Mortimer—offended, justly offended, as she supposed, with her. The probability was, she would be banished from his thoughts, or if remembered, at least without esteem or tenderness; thus might his heart soon be qualified for making another choice. She walked to the window, and saw the ship already under weigh; she saw the white sails fluttering in the breeze, and heard the shouts of the mariners. "Oh Mortimer!" cried she, "is it thus we part? is it thus the expectations you raised in my heart are disappointed? You go hence, and deem Amanda unworthy a farewell; you gaze, perhaps, at this moment on Castle Carberry, without breathing

one sigh for its inhabitants. Ah! had you loved sincerely, never would the impulse of resentment have conquered the emotion of tenderness; no, Mortimer, you deceived me, and perhaps yourself, in saying I was dear to you; had I been so, never could you have acted in this manner." Her eyes followed the course of the vessel, till it appeared like a speck in the horizon. "He is gone," said she, weeping afresh, and withdrawing herself from the window—"he is gone, and if ever I meet him again, it will probably be as the husband of Lady Euphrasia."

CHAP.

CHAP. V.

Think'st thou I'll make a life of jealousy,
To follow still the changes of the moon
With fresh fumnifes. No, to be once in doubt,
Is to be resolv'd.—But yet
I'll see before I doubt; when I doubt, prove;
And on the proof there is no more but this,
Away at once with love or jealousy.

SHAKESPEARE.

LORD MORTIMER had, in reality, departed with sentiments very unfavourable to Amanda; he had waited impatiently at St. Catharine's, in the fond expectation of having all his doubts removed, by a candid explanation of the motives which caused her precipitate journey from Wales. His soul sighed for a reconciliation; his tenderness was redoubled by being so long restrained; the idea of folding his beloved Amanda to his bosom, and hearing that she deserved all the tenderness and sensibility which glowed in that bosom for her, gave him the highest pleasure; but when the appointed hour passed, and no Amanda appeared, language cannot express his disappointment. Almost distracted by it, he ventured to enquire concerning her from Sister Mary;

and long after the friendly Nun had retired to the Convent, continued to wander about the ruins, till the shadows of night had enveloped every object from his view. "She fears to come, then," exclaimed he, quitting the desolate spot, oppressed with the keenest anguish, "she fears to come, because she cannot satisfy my doubts. I witnessed her agitation, her embarrassment this morning, when I hinted at them; the mystery which separated us will not be explained, and it is vain to think we shall ever meet, as I once flattered myself we should."

This thought seemed to strike at all his hopes; the distress and disorder of his mind was depicted on his countenance, and escaped not the observation and raillery of the Marchioness and Lady Euphrasia; but their raillery was vain, and unanswered by him; he was absorbed in a train of pensive reflections, which they had neither power to remove or disturb.

Most unwillingly he accompanied them the ensuing day to a splendid entertainment, given purposely for them in the neighbourhood. The unexpected sight of Amanda, as she stood on a little elevated bank, to avoid the carriage, caused a sudden emotion of surprise and delight in his bosom; the utmost powers of eloquence could not have pleaded her cause so successfully as her own appearance at that minute did. The languor of her face, its mild and seraphic expression, her pensive attitude, and the timid modesty with which she seemed shrinking from observation, all touched

touched the sensibility of Lord Mortimer, awakened his softest feelings, revived his hopes, and made him resolve to seek another opportunity of demanding an explanation from her. The sudden colour which flushed his cheeks, and the sparkling of his eyes, as he looked from the carriage, attracted the notice of his companions. They smiled maliciously at each other; and Lady Euphrasia declared, she supposed the girl was stationed there to try and attract admiration, which, perhaps, her silly old father had told her she merited, or else to meet with adventures. Lord Mortimer drew in his head; and the contrast between her Ladyship and the fair being he had been looking at, never struck him so forcibly as at that moment, and lessened one as much as it elevated the other in his estimation.

He wandered near the castle the next evening, in hopes of meeting Amanda; his disappointment was diminished by seeing Ellen, who, he was confident, would be faithful to the message entrusted to her; with this confidence he hastened to the rocks, every moment expecting the appearance of Amanda. Her image, as it appeared to him the preceding day, dwelt upon his imagination, and he forcibly felt how essential to his peace was a reconciliation with her. An hour elapsed, and his tenderness again began to give way to resentment; it was not Ellen, but Amanda he doubted. He traversed the beach in an agony of impatience and anxiety; a feverish heat pervaded his frame,

frame, and he trembled with agitation; at length he heard the distant sound of the supper-bell at Ulster Lodge, which never rung till a late hour. All hopes of seeing Amanda were now given up, and every intention of meeting her at a future period relinquished. She avoided him designedly it was evident; he would have cursed himself for betraying such anxiety about her, and his wounded pride revolted from the idea of seeking another interview. "No, Amanda," he exclaimed, as he passed the castle, "you can no longer have any claim upon me; mysterious appearances, in the most candid mind, will raise suspicions. In giving you an opportunity for accounting for such appearances, I did all that candour, tenderness, sensibility, and honour, could dictate; and instead of again making efforts to converse with you, I must now make others, which I trust will be more successful—entirely forget you."

The next morning he accompanied the Marquis in his barge to the frigate, where he was agreeably surprised to find in the commander an old friend of his, Captain Somerville, returned to Ulster Lodge with his visitors; and there, in a half jesting, half serious manner, asked Lord Mortimer to accompany him on his intended cruise. This his Lordship instantly promised he would, with pleasure; he was completely tired of the Rosline family, and was besides glad of an opportunity of convincing Amanda he was not quite so fascinated to her, as she perhaps believed.

lieved, by his quitting the neighbourhood ere their departure. As he descended to the boat, the sight of Amanda shook his resolution; she seemed destined to cross his path, merely to give him disquietude; an ardent wish sprung in his heart to address her, but it was instantly suppressed, by reflecting how premeditatedly she had avoided him. Pride, therefore, prompted him to pass her in silence; yet as the boat receded from the shore, his eyes were rivetted to the spot on which she stood; and when he could no longer see her white gown fluttering in the wind, he gave a sigh to the remembrance of the happy days he had passed with her at Tudor Hall, and another to the idea that such hours would never more be enjoyed by him.

The family at Ulster Lodge were both mortified and disappointed by his departure; though he, perceiving their displeasure, had endeavoured to lessen it, by promising to wait their arrival in Dublin, and return with them to England. His departure seemed a tacit intimation that he was not as much attached to Lady Euphrasia as they wished him to be; a suspicion of this nature had, indeed, for some time pervaded their minds, and also that his affections were elsewhere disposed of. They had reason to believe that the person who possessed them dwelt in the vicinity of the Lodge, from the great alteration which took place in his manner immediately after his arrival at it. In hopes of discovering who this was, they watched

watched him critically at all the parties he frequented with them, but soon found it was not the present but the absent objects had the power of exciting emotions in him. At the name of Amanda Fitzalan, or her father, they observed him colour, and frequently saw him contemplate Castle Carberry, as if it contained a being infinitely dear to him; to Amanda, therefore, they feared he was attached, and supposed the attachment commenced at the Kilcorbans ball, where they had noticed his impassioned glances at this hated, because too lovely, a relation. The most unbounded rage took possession of their souls; they regretted ever having come to Ireland, where they supposed Lord Mortimer had first seen Amanda, as Lord Cherbury had mentioned the children of Fitzalan being strangers to him or his family. They knew the passions of Lord Cherbury were impetuous, and that ambition was the leading principle of his soul; anxious for an alliance between his family and theirs; they knew he would ill brook any obstacle which should be thrown in the way of its completion, and therefore resolved, if Lord Mortimer, at their next meeting, appeared averse to the wishes of his father, to acquaint the Earl with the occasion of his son's disinclination, and represent Fitzalan and his daughter as aiding and abetting each other in an insidious scheme to entangle the affections of Lord Mortimer, and draw him into a marriage; a scheme which, to a man of the world, (as they knew Lord Cherbury to be,)

be,) would appear so very probable, as to gain implicit credit. This they knew would convert the esteem he felt for Fitzalan into hatred and contempt, his favour would consequently be withdrawn, and the father and child again sunk into indigent obscurity. To think that Amanda, by dire necessity, should be reduced to servitude; to think the elegance of her form should be disguised by the garb of poverty, and the charms of her face faded by misery, were ideas so grateful, so extatic to their hearts, that, to have them realized, they felt they could with pleasure relinquish the attentions of Lord Mortimer, to have a pretext for injuring Fitzalan with his father. Though not quite assured their suspicions were well founded, they would never have hesitated communicating them as such to Lord Cherbury; but, for their own satisfaction, they wished to know what reason they had to entertain them. Lady Greystock was the only person they observed on a footing of intimacy with Amanda, and through her means flattered themselves they might make the desired discovery. They therefore began to unbend from their haughtiness, and make overtures for an intimacy with her; overtures which she received with delight, and, in their present agitation, forgot their past neglect, which had given her such disgust. As they became intimate with her, they were much amused by a shrewd manner she possessed of telling stories, and placing the foibles and imperfections of their visitors in the most conspicuous and
ludicrous

ludicrous light; particularly of such visitors as were not agreeable to them. With the foibles of human nature she was well acquainted, also with the art of turning those foibles to her own advantage. She perceived the egregious vanity of the Marchioness and Lady Euphrafia; and by administering large potions of (what Sterne styles) the delicious essence of the soul to them, soon became an immense favourite. After an injunction of secrecy, the Marchioness communicated her fears relative to Lord Mortimer and Amanda, which, she pretended, regard for one, and pity for the other had excited; as an attachment either of an honourable, or dishonourable nature, she knew Lord Cherbury would never pardon. To know, therefore, how far matters had proceeded between them, would be some satisfaction, and might, perhaps, be the means of preventing the ill consequences she dreaded. Lady Greystock was not to be imposed on; she perceived it was not pity for Amanda, but envy and jealousy which had excited the fears of the Marchioness. If Lord Mortimer was attached to Amanda, from his sentiments and manner, she was convinced it was an attachment of the purest nature. She carefully concealed her thoughts, however, affected to enter into all the alarms of the Marchioness, and, as she saw she was expected to do, promised all in her power should be done for discovering what attachment subsisted between his Lordship and Miss Fitzalan. For this purpose she began to grow constant

stant in her visits at Castle Carberry, often spending whole days in the most familiar manner with Amanda, and endeavouring, by various methods, to beguile her of the secrets of her heart. Sometimes she rallied her on her melancholy; sometimes expressed pity for it, in strains of the most soothing tenderness; would frequently relate little fictitious and embellished anecdotes of her own youth, in which she said she had suffered the most exquisite misery from an unfortunate entanglement; would then advert to Lord Mortimer, express her wonder at his precipitate departure, and her admiration of his virtues; declaring, if ever Lady Euphrasia gained his heart, which she much doubted, she must be considered as one of the most fortunate of women.

Delicacy sealed the lips of Amanda, and guarded her secret. She believed her passion to be hopeless, and felt that, to be offered consolation on such a subject, would, to her feelings, be truly humiliating; but though she could command her words, she could not her feelings, and they were visibly expressed in her countenance. She blushed whenever Lord Mortimer was mentioned, looked shocked if an union between him and Lady Euphrasia was hinted at, and smiled if a probability was suggested of its never taking place. Lady Greystock at last relinquished her attempts at betraying Amanda into a confession of her sentiments; indeed she thought such a confession not very requisite, as her countenance pretty clearly developed

developed what they were; and she deemed herself authorized to inform the Marchioness that she was sure something had passed between Lord Mortimer and Amanda, though what, she could not discover, from the circumspection of the latter. The Marchioness was enraged, and more determined than ever on involving Amanda in destruction, if Lord Mortimer hesitated a moment in obeying the wishes of his father, by uniting himself to Lady Euphrasia.

CHAP.

CHAP. VI.

And, to be plain, 'tis not your person
That my stomach's set so sharp on ;
But 'tis your better part, your riches,
That my enamour'd heart bewitches.

HUDIBRAS.

A MONTH after the departure of Lord Mortimer, the Rosline family left Ulster Lodge. Amanda sighed, as she saw them pass, at the idea of the approaching meeting, which might, perhaps, soon be followed by an event that would render her fond remembrance of Lord Mortimer improper. Many of the families about the castle were already gone to town for the winter; those who remained in the country till after Christmas, among whom were the Kilcorbans, had so entirely neglected Amanda, from the time the Marchioness arrived in the neighbourhood, that they could not think of renewing their visits, confident as they were, from the proper dignity of her and Fitzalan's manner, that they would be unwelcome.

The weather was now often too severe to permit Amanda to take her usual rambles; and the solitude of the castle was heightened by her own melancholy ideas, as well as by the dreariness of the season. No
more

more the magic hand of hope sketched scenes of flattering brightness, to dissipate the gloominess of the present ones. The prospects of Amanda's heart were as dreary, as desolate as those she viewed from the windows of the castle; her usual avocations no longer yielded delight; every idea, every occupation was embittered by the reflection of being lessened in the estimation of Lord Mortimer. Her health declined with her peace, and again Fitzalan had the anguish of seeing sorrow nipping his lovely blossom; the rose forsook her cheek, and her form assumed a fragile delicacy, which threatened the demolition of his earthly happiness. He was not ignorant of the cause of her dejection, but he would not shock her feelings by hinting it. Every effort which tenderness could suggest, he assayed to cheer her, but without any durable effect; for though she smiled when he expressed a wish to see her cheerful, it was a smile transient as the gleanings of a wintry sun, and which only rendered the succeeding gloom more conspicuous.

At this period of distress, Lady Greystock, who continued her visits at the castle, made a proposal, which Fitzalan eagerly embraced; this was to take Amanda with her to London, whither she was obliged to go directly, about a law-suit carrying on between her and the nephew of her late husband.

Change of scene, Fitzalan trusted, would remove from Amanda's mind the dejection which oppressed it,

it, and consequently aid the restoration of her health. Of Lord Mortimer's renewing his addresses he had not the slightest apprehension, as he neglected the opportunities he might have had in the country for such a purpose. Fitzalan, it may be remembered, knew not that his Lordship had ever deviated from his indifference, and he believed it occasioned by a transfer of his affections to Lady Euphrasia; he was also ignorant of the great intimacy between the Rosline family and Lady Greystock, and consequently of the probability there was, from such an intimacy, of Amanda's being often in the way of Lord Mortimer. If she met him, he was confident it would be as the husband or favoured lover of Lady Euphrasia; and in either of these characters, he was certain, from the rectitude and purity of her principles, she would be more than ever impressed with the necessity of conquering her attachment; whilst the pain attending such a conviction would be lessened, and probably soon removed, by surrounding objects, and the gay scenes she must engage in, from being the companion of Lady Greystock, who had a numerous and elegant acquaintance in London.

Her Ladyship appeared to him, as she did to many others, a pleasing, rational woman; one to whose care his heart's best treasure might safely be confided. He was induced to accept her protection for his Amanda, not only on account of her present, but future welfare. His own health was extremely deli-

cate ; he deemed his life very precarious, and flattered himself Lady Greystock, by having his beloved girl under her care, would grow so attached to her, as to prove a friend if he should be snatched away, ere his newly-obtained independence enabled him to make a provision for her ; in indulging this hope, his heart could not reproach him for any thing mean or selfish. Her Ladyship had frequently assured him all her relations were very distant ones, and in affluent circumstances ; so that if his Amanda received any proof of kindness from her, she could neither injure or encroach on the rights of others.

This, however, was not the case, though carefully concealed from him, as well as many others, by her Ladyship. Her education had either given birth to, or strengthened the artful propensities of her disposition ; she had been one of the numerous offspring of a gentleman in the southern part of Ireland, whose wife, a complete housewife, knowing his inability of giving his daughters fortunes, determined to bring them up so as to save one for their future husbands.

At the age of nineteen Miss Bridget, by her reputation for domestic cleverness, attracted the notice of a man of easy independence in the neighbourhood, who being a perfect Nimrod, wanted somebody to manage those concerns at home which he neglected for the field and kennel ; and in obtaining Miss Bridget, he procured this valuable acquisition. His love of sport, with his life, was fatally terminated the second year

year of his marriage, by his attempting to leap a five-bar gate. A good jointure devolved to his widow, and the office of consoling her to the Rector of the parish, a little fat elderly man, who might have sat very well for the picture of Boniface. So successful were his arguments, that he not only expelled sorrow from her heart, but introduced himself into it, and had the felicity of receiving her hand as soon as her weeds were laid aside. Four years they lived in uninterrupted peace; but too free an enjoyment of the good things of this life undermined the constitution of the Rector; he was ordered to Bath, where his mortal career was shortly terminated, and his whole fortune was left to his wife.

In the house where she lodged was an ancient Baronet, who had never been married; his fortune was considerable, but his manner so strange and whimsical, that he appeared incapable of enjoying the advantages it would have afforded to others. Notwithstanding his oddities, he was compassionate; and as the fair relict was unaccompanied by a friend, he waited on her for the purpose of offering consolation, and any service in his power. This attention instantly inspired her with an idea of trying to make him feel tenderer sentiments than those of pity for her. His title and fortune were so attractive, that neither his capricious disposition, or the disparity of their ages, he being sixty, and she only eight-and-twenty, could prevent her ardently desiring a connection between

them. Her efforts to effect this were long unsuccessful; but perseverance will almost work miracles. Her constant good humour, and unremitted solicitude about him, who was in general an invalid, at last made an impression on his flinty heart, and, in a fit of sudden gratitude, he offered her his hand, which was eagerly accepted.

The presumptive heir to the Baronet's large possessions, was the son and only child of a deceased sister. At the period this unexpected alliance took place he was about twenty; pleasing in his person, and engaging in his manner, and tenderly beloved by his uncle. This love, Lady Greystock saw, if it continued, would frustrate her wish of possessing the Baronet's whole property. Various schemes fluctuated in her mind relative to the manner in which she should lay the foundation for Rushbrook's ruin; ere she could determine on one, chance discovered a secret which completely aided her intentions.

In the neighbourhood of the Baronet's country residence, Rushbrook had formed an attachment for the daughter of a man, against whom his uncle entertained the most inveterate enmity. An union with this girl, she was well convinced, would ruin him. She therefore gave him to understand she knew of his attachment, and sincerely pitied his situation; encouraging his love by the most flattering eulogiums on his adored Emily; declared her regret that hearts so congenial should be separated; and at last inti-

mated,

mated, that if they wished to unite, she was convinced she would soon be able to obtain Sir Geoffry's forgiveness for such a step. Her artful insinuations hurried the unsuspicious pair into the snare she had spread for them; the consequence of this was what she expected.

Sir Geoffry's rage was unappeaseable, and he solemnly vowed never more to behold his nephew. Lady Greystock wished to preserve, if possible, appearances to the world, and prevailed on him to give her five hundred pounds for Rushbrook, to which she added five of her own, and presented the notes to him, with an assurance of pleading his cause whenever she found a favourable opportunity for doing so.

He purchased an ensigncy in a regiment on the point of embarking for America, where he felt he would rather encounter distress than among those who had known him in affluence.

Her Ladyship now redoubled her attention to Sir Geoffry, and at last prepossessed him so strongly with the idea of her affection for him, that he made a will, bequeathing her his whole fortune, which she flattered herself with soon enjoying; but the constitution of Sir Geoffry was stronger than she imagined, and policy obliged her to adhere to a conduct which had gained his favour, as she knew the least alteration in it would, to his capricious temper, be sufficient to make him crush all her hopes.

Fifteen years passed in this manner, when a friend of Rushbrook's advised him no longer to be deluded by the promises Lady Greystock still continued to make of interceding in his favour, but to write himself to his uncle for forgiveness, which the duty he owed his family, and the distress of his situation, should prompt him to immediately. Rushbrook accordingly wrote a most pathetic letter, and his friend, as he had promised, delivered it himself to the Baronet. The contents of the letter, and the remonstrance of his visiter, produced a great change in the sentiments of the Baronet. Tenderness for a nephew he had adopted as his heir from his infancy, began to revive; and he seriously reflected, that, by leaving his fortune to Lady Greystock, he should enrich a family unconnected with him, whilst the last branch of his own was left to obscurity and wretchedness. Pride recoiled from such an idea, and he told the gentleman he would consider about a reconciliation with his nephew.

The conversation between them, which Lady Greystock had contrived to overhear, filled her with dismay; but this was increased almost to distraction, when an attorney being sent for, she repaired again to her hiding-place, and heard a new will dictated, entirely in Rushbrook's favour.

Sir Geoffry was soon prevailed on to see his nephew, but Mrs. Rushbrook and the children were not suffered to appear before him; they were, however,

ever, supplied with every thing requisite for making a genteel appearance, and accompanying the regiment (again ordered abroad) with comfort.

Soon after their departure, Sir Geoffry sunk into a sullen state of insensibility, from which no hopes of his ever recovering could be entertained. The situation was propitious to the designs of Lady Greystock; none but creatures of her own were admitted to his chamber. An attorney was sent for, who had often transacted business for her relative to her affairs in Ireland; and a good bribe easily prevailed on him to draw up a will she dictated, similar to that before made in her favour. The Baronet was raised in her arms, whilst the attorney guided his almost lifeless hand in signing it, and two clerks set their names as witnesses: Sir Geoffry expired almost immediately after this scheme was executed.

Rushbrook's friend, who had been appointed to act for him, if this event took place whilst he was abroad, now appeared. A will found in Sir Geoffry's cabinet was read, by which it appeared Mr. Rushbrook was his sole heir. The exultation of the peruser, however, was of short continuance; her Ladyship's attorney appeared, and declared the will was rendered null by one of later date, which he had drawn up in Sir Geoffry's last moments, by his express desire. Consternation and surprise pervaded the mind of Rushbrook's friend; he saw the will was too well attested for him to dispute it, yet he sus-

pected foul play, and lost no time in communicating his suspicion to Rushbrook.

Her Ladyship settled her affairs most expeditiously, and returned with delight to her native country, after a very long absence from it. Most of her near relations were dead, but she had many distant ones; who, prompted by the knowledge of her large fortune, eagerly reminded her of their affinity, and vied with each other in paying her attention. This was extremely pleasing to her Ladyship, who was fond of pleasure at other people's expence; for herself, she had laid down rules of the most rigid economy, which she strictly adhered to. From the many invitations she received, she was seldom a resident in her own house; she judged of others by herself, and ascribed the attentions she received to their real source, self-interest, which she laughed secretly to think she should disappoint.

She was remarkable, as Miss Kilcorban informed Amanda, for asking young people to do little matters for her, such as making her millinery, working ruffles, aprons, and handkerchiefs.

The tranquillity she enjoyed for two years after Sir Geoffrey's death was a little interrupted by his nephew's arrival from America, and commencing a suit directly against her, by the advice of his friends, and some eminent lawyers, on the supposition that the will by which she inherited had been made when his uncle was in a state of imbecility.

Lady

Lady Greystock, however, received but a trifling shock from this; she knew he had no money to carry on such an affair, and that his advocates would lose their zeal in his cause, when convinced of the state of his finances. On being obliged to go to London to attend the suit, it immediately occurred that Amanda would be a most pleasing companion to take along with her, as she would not only enliven the hours she must sometimes pass at home, but do a number of little things in the way of dress, which would save a great deal of expence.

Amanda, on the first proposal of accompanying her, warmly opposed it; she felt unutterable reluctance to leave her father, and assured him she would, by exerting herself, prove that a change of scene was not requisite for restoring her cheerfulness. Fitzalan knew her sincerity in making this promise, but he also knew her inability of performing it: his happiness, he declared, depended on her complying with this request; he even said his own health would probably be established by it, as, during her absence, he would partake of the amusements of the country, which he had hitherto declined on her account. This assertion prevailed on her to consent, and immediate preparations were made for her journey, as the invitation had not been given till within a few days of her Ladyship's intended departure. As she went by Holyhead, Fitzalan determined on sending Ellen to her parents till Amanda returned from England,

which determination pleased Ellen exceedingly, as she longed to see her family, and tell them particulars of Chip. As the hour approached for quitting her father, the regret and reluctance of Amanda increased, nor were his feelings less oppressive, though better concealed; but when the moment of parting came, they could no longer be suppressed; he held her with a trembling grasp to his heart, as if life would forsake it. On her departure, the gloom on his mind seemed like a pre-sentiment of evil; he repented forcing her from him, and scarcely could he refrain from saying they must not part.

Lady Greytock, who, in every scene, and every situation, preserved her composure, hinted to him the injury he was doing his daughter by such emotions, and mentioned how short their separation would be, and what benefit would accrue to Amanda from it.

This last consideration recalling to his mind, instantly composed him, and he handed them to her Ladyship's chariot, which was followed by a hired chaise, containing her woman and Ellen; he then bade her a last adieu, returned to his solitary habitation to pray, and, in spite of all his efforts, weep for his darling child.

Amanda's tears streamed down her pale cheek, and never did she experience a pang of such sorrow as that she felt, when the chaise descending a hill, she caught the last glimpse of Castle Carberry.

She

She perceived, however, that her Ladyship had no relish for a gloomy companion, and therefore endeavoured to recover her spirits, and enter into conversation.

Lady Greystock had a number of friends in that part of Ireland, and therefore never stopped at an inn.

"I always, my dear," said she to Amanda, "make use of the friendship professed for me, and thus endeavour to render the great road of life delightful."

They arrived the third day in Sackville-Street, where her Ladyship had a house, and two days after embarked for England. They slept the first night they landed at Holyhead, and the next morning pursued their journey.

CHAP. VII.

*A song, a flower, a name, at once restore
 Those long connected scenes, when first they mov'd
 Th' attention——*

AKENSIDE.

THE dejection of Amanda gradually declined, as the idea of seeing Lord Mortimer again revived; it revived not, however, without hopes, fears, and agitations. Sometimes she imagined she should find him devoted to Lady Euphrasia; then again believed his honour and sincerity would not allow him to give her up so suddenly, and that this apparent indifference proceeded from resentment, which would vanish if an opportunity once offered (and she trusted there would) for explaining her conduct. She endeavoured to calm the emotions these ideas gave rise to, by reflecting that a short time now would most probably terminate her suspense.

They stopped for the night, about five o'clock, at an inn about a mile from Tudor Hall. After dinner, Amanda informed Lady Greystock she wished to accompany Ellen to her parents. To this her Ladyship made no objection, on finding she did not want the carriage. She charged her, however, not to for-

get

get the hour of tea, by which time she would be refreshed by a nap, and ready to engage her at a game of picquet.

They set out unattended, as Ellen refused the ostler's offer of carrying her portmanteau, saying, she would send for it the next day. This she did by Amanda's desire, who wished, unobserved, to pursue a walk, in which she promised herself a melancholy indulgence, from reviewing the well-known scenes endeared by tender recollections.

A mournful, yet not undelightful sensation attends the contemplation of scenes where we once enjoyed felicity. Departed joys are ever remembered with an enthusiasm of tenderness, which soothes the sorrow we experience for their loss.

Such were the present feelings of Amanda; while Ellen, undisturbed by regrets for the past, pointed out, with pleasure, the dwellings of her inmates and friends. Yet when she came to Chip's deserted cottage, she stopped, and a tear stole from her eye, accompanied at the same time by a smile, which seemed to say, "Though thou art now lonely and cheerless, the period is approaching when comfort and gaiety shall resume their stations within thee; when the blaze of thy fire and thy taper shall not only diffuse cheerfulness within, but without, and give a ray to the desolate or benighted traveller, to guide him to thy hospitable shelter."

Amanda,

Amanda, leaning on Ellen's arm, proceeded slowly in her walk; the evening was delightful; the blue vault of Heaven was spangled with stars; and the air, without being severely cold, was clear and refreshing. Their road, on one side, was skirted with the high woods of Tudor Hall. Amanda gazed on them with emotion; but when she came to the gate which Lord Mortimer had opened for her departure at their first interview, the softness of her heart could no longer be resisted: she stopped, leaned pensively upon it, and wept. The evergreens, with which the woods abounded, prevented their wearing a desolate appearance; she wished to have pierced into their most sequestered gloom, but she had no time to indulge this wish; nor did she, indeed, believe her companion, who was tinctured with superstitious fears, would have accompanied her. "When the glow of vegetation again revives," said she to herself, "when the blossom and the flowers again spread their spangled foliage to the sun, and every shade resounds with harmony, where, alas! will Amanda be? far distant, in all probability, from these delightful scenes, perhaps neglected and forgotten by their master."

The awful murmurs of the wind rustling through the trees, joined to the solemn sound of a neighbouring waterfall, began to excite fears in Ellen's breast; she laid her trembling hand on Amanda, and besought her, for the love of God, to hasten to the cottage.

The

The road still wound round the wood, and lights from a small village, which lay on its borders, cast various shadows upon the trees; whilst the hum of distant voices floated upon the gale, and fancy pictured joyous groups of rustics assembling round their fires, to enjoy refreshment after the labours of the day.

"Peaceful people," said Amanda, "when the wants of nature are satisfied, no care or trouble obtrudes upon your minds; tired, but not exhausted with the toils of the day, with preparing the bosom of the earth for the ethereal mildness of the spring, you seek and enjoy a calm repose."

In the lane which led to her nurse's cottage, Amanda paused for a moment. Down this lane Lord Mortimer had once pursued her; she looked towards the mansion of Tudor Hall; she endeavoured to discern the library, but all was dark and dismal, except the wing, which Ellen informed her was occupied by the domestics. Through the window of Edwin's cottage, they saw all the family seated round a blazing fire, chatting and laughing. The transport of Ellen's heart overcame every idea of caution; she hastily unlatched the door, and flung herself into her parents' arms: their surprise and joy was unbounded, and Amanda was received and welcomed with as much tenderness as their child; without ever asking the reason of her sudden appearance. The first question was, would she not stay with them? and her answer filled them with regret and disappointment.

Perceiving

Perceiving them about procuring her refreshments, she declared she had not a minute to stay; the time allotted for her walk was already exceeded, and she feared Lady Greystock would be offended at being left so long at an inn by herself; she therefore hastily presented some little presents she had brought for the family, and was bidding them farewell, when poor Ellen, who, from so long residing with her young lady, almost adored her, suddenly flung herself into her arms, and clinging round her neck, as if to prevent a separation, which, till the moment of its arrival, she thought she could have supported, exclaimed—

“Oh, my dear young lady! we are going to part, and my heart sinks within me at the idea; even Chip himself, if he was here, could not console me. I know you are not happy, and that increases my sorrow; your sweet cheek is pale, and I have often seen you cry when you thought no pity was minding you. If you, who are so good, are not happy, how can a being like me hope to be so? Oh, may I soon be pleased with seeing you return the mistress of Tudor Hall, married to the sweetest, handsomest of noblemen, who I know in my soul loves you; as well indeed he may, for where would he see the fellow of my young lady. Then Chip and I will be so happy, for I am sure you and my Lord will shelter our humble cottage.”

Amanda pressed the affectionate girl to her breast, and mingled tears with her's, while she softly whispered to her not to hint at such an event: “But be assured.

assured, my dearest Ellen," continued she, "that I shall ever rejoice at your felicity, which, to the utmost of my power, I would promote, and hope soon to hear of your union with Chip."

"Alack-a-tay!" said her nurse, "are you going away, when I thought you come to stay among us? and then, perhaps, my Lort would have come, and then there would have been such a happy meeting; why I verily thought he would have gone distracted when he found you, as one may say, run away; and, to be sure, I did pity him, and should have made no scruple to tell him where you were, had I known it myself, which he suspected, for he offered me a sight of money if I would discover. Then there is Parson Howel, why he has been like unto nothing but a ghost since you went away; and he does so sigh, and he comes almost every day to ask me about you, and whether I think or know Lord Mortimer is with you; he will be in such grief to think you were here without his seeing you."

"Well," said Amanda, endeavouring to appear cheerful, "we may all yet have a happy meeting."

She then repeated her farewell, and leaning on the arm of old Edwin, returned to the inn, where she again bid him adieu; and hastening to her Ladyship, found her just awaking from a comfortable slumber. They drank tea; and after playing for about an hour at piquet, retired to rest. Amanda, who enjoyed but little repose, rose early in the morning; and finding
her

her Ladyship not quite ready, went down to the court to walk about till she was, where, to her great surprise, the first object she perceived was Howell, leaning pensively against a gate opposite the house; he flew over, and catching her hand, exclaimed—

“ You are surprised, but I trust not displeased; I could not resist such an opportunity of seeing you once more, after all I have suffered from your precipitate journey, and the probability of never more beholding you. I have been watching here in expectation of this happiness since the first dawn of day.”

“ I am sorry,” said Amanda, gravely, “ your time was so ill employed.”

“ How coldly you speak,” cried he. “ Ah! could you read my heart, you would see so little presumption in it, that you would, I am confident, pity, though you could not relieve its feelings. Every spot you loved to frequent I have haunted since your departure; your mother’s grave has often been the scene of pensive meditation, nor has it wanted its vernal offering; the loveliest flowers of my garden I have wove into wreaths, and hung them over it, in fond remembrance of her angel daughter.”

The plaintive sound of Howell’s voice, the dejection of his countenance, excited the softest feelings of sensibility in Amanda’s bosom; but she grew confused by the tenderness of his expression, and saying
she

she was happy to see him, tried to disengage her hand, that she might retire.

"Surely," said he, still detaining it a few moments, "you might grant me without reluctance; you who are going to enjoy every happiness and pleasure, going to meet the favoured——"

Amanda anticipated the name he was about uttering, and her confusion redoubled. She attempted again, yet in vain, to withdraw her hand, and turned to see whether any one was observing them; how great was her mortification, on perceiving Lady Greystock leaning from a window exactly over their heads. She smiled significantly at Amanda on being seen; and the carriage being ready, said she would attend her below stairs. Howell now relinquished Amanda's hand; he saw she looked displeased, and expressed such sorrow, accompanied with such submissive apologies for offending her, that she could not avoid according him her pardon. He handed both her and Lady Greystock into the carriage, and looked a melancholy adieu as it drove off.

"Upon my word, a pretty smart young fellow," said Lady Greystock; "though impatient this long time to set out, I could not think of interrupting the interesting *tête-à-tête* I saw between you and him. I suppose you have been a resident in this part of the country before, from your seeming to know this tender swain so well."

Amanda

Amanda wished to avoid acknowledging this; if known, she feared it would lead to a discovery, or at least excite a suspicion of her intimacy with Lord Mortimer, which she was desirous of concealing while in this uncertainty concerning him.

"Your Ladyship has heard, I believe," replied she, "that Ellen's mother nursed me?"

"Yes, my dear," answered her Ladyship, with some smartness; "but if your acquaintance even commenced with this youth in infancy, I fancy it has been renewed since that period."

Amanda blushed deeply, and to hide her confusion, pretended to be looking at the prospect from the window. Lady Greystock's eyes pursued her's; Tudor Hall was conspicuous from the road, and Amanda involuntarily sighed as she viewed it.

"That is a fine domain," said Lady Greystock; "I presume you have visited it, and know its owner?"

Amanda could not assert a falsehood, neither could she evade the enquiries of Lady Greystock, and therefore not only confessed its being the estate of Lord Mortimer, but her own residence near it the preceding summer. Her Ladyship immediately conjectured it was then the attachment between her and Lord Mortimer had commenced; and the blushes, the hesitation, and the unwillingness of Amanda in owning her visit to Wales, all confirmed this conjecture. She tried, however, to insinuate herself into her full confidence

dence by warm expressions of esteem, and by hinting that, from the disposition of Lord Mortimer, she could not believe he ever did, or ever would think seriously of Lady Euphrasia : this she hoped would either induce or betray Amanda to open her whole heart ; but she was disappointed. She flattered herself, however, with thinking she had discovered enough to satisfy the Marchioness, if she (as Lady Greystock feared she would) expressed any disapprobation at seeing Amanda her companion ; she intended saying, that Fitzalan had absolutely forced her under her protection.

They arrived late in the evening of the third day at Pall-Mall, where her Ladyship's agent had previously taken lodgings for them.

Lady Greystock, though immersed in business against the approaching trial, neglected no means of amusement ; and the day after her arrival, sent a card of enquiry to the Rosline family, as the most eligible mode of informing them of it. The next morning, as she expected, she received a visit from them. Amanda was sitting in the window when the carriage drove up to the door ; she instantly arose, and left the room, determined neither to expose herself to their impertinence, or appear solicitous for their notice, by staying in their company uninvited. Lady Greystock soon informed them of Amanda's having accompanied her to London ; and they, as she expected, expressed both surprise and displeasure at it. As she
had

had settled in her own mind, she therefore told them that Fitzalan had urged her to take his daughter under her care, with entreaties she could not resist; entreaties, she added, with a significant look, she believed he had good reason for making. She then related all she suspected, or rather had discovered, relative to the attachment between Lord Mortimer and Amanda having commenced the preceding summer in Wales.

The Marchioness and Lady Euphrasia instantly concluded she was sent to London for the purpose of having it completed by a marriage: this, however, they determined to prevent. The Marchioness felt the most inveterate hatred against her; and also that, to prevent her being advantageously settled, even if that settlement threatened not to interfere with the one she had projected for her daughter, she could undertake almost any project. Though she abhorred the idea of noticing her, yet she was tempted now to do so, from the idea that it would better enable her to watch her actions. This idea she communicated in a hasty whisper to Lady Euphrasia, who approving it, she told Lady Greystock, as Miss Fitzalan was her guest, she would on that account permit her to be introduced to them. Amanda was accordingly sent for. On entering the room, Lady Greystock took her hand, and presented her to the Marchioness and Lady Euphrasia. The former, half rising, with a coldness she could not conquer, said, whenever Lady Greystock honoured her with a visit, she should be happy to

to see Miss Fitzalan along with her. The latter only noticed her by a slight bow; and when Amanda drew a chair near the sofa on which she sat, or rather reclined, she continued staring in her face, and alternately humming an Italian air, and caressing a little dog she had brought with her. The unembarrassed elegance of Amanda's air and manner surprised and mortified them, as they expected to have seen her covered with confusion at an introduction so unexpected. To their haughty souls nothing was more delightful than the awe and deference which vulgar and illiberal minds are so apt to pay to rank and fortune. They were provoked to see in Amanda conscious dignity, instead of trembling diffidence. As she sat by Lady Euphrasia, the Marchioness could not help secretly confessing she was a dangerous rival to her daughter; for never did her lovely features and ingenuous countenance appear to such advantage, as when contrasted to Lady Euphrasia's. The Marchioness withdrew soon after her entrance, unable longer to restrain the malignant passions which envy had excited.

Both she and Lady Euphrasia were convinced that, to communicate their suspicions at present to Lord Cherbury about her and his son, would not answer the end proposed; for it could be of little consequence, they reflected, to withdraw the esteem of the father, if that of the son's continued; who, independent in his notions, and certain of the fortunes of his

his ancestors, might not hesitate to gratify himself. The point therefore was, by some deep-laid scheme, to ruin Amanda in the estimation of Lord Mortimer; and if in the power of mortals to contrive and execute such a scheme, they gave themselves credit for being able to effect it.

The blow at her fond hopes they resolved should be followed by one against the peace of Fitzalan, on whom they knew, whenever they pleased, they could draw the resentment of Lord Cherbury. Thus should they completely triumph over the lovely Amanda, plunge two beings they detested into poverty and wretchedness, destroy expectations which interfered with their own, and secure an alliance with a man they had long wished united to their family.

From the unaltered indifference of Lord Mortimer to Lady Euphrasia, they were convinced of his predilection for another; flattering themselves that nothing but a prior attachment could have rendered him insensible to the attractions of her Ladyship. To render the object of this attachment contemptible in his sight, they believed would produce the transfer of affections they so long desired. The haughty soul of Lady Euphrasia would never have permitted her to think of accepting Lord Mortimer (after his neglect of her) but by the opportunity she should have by such an acceptance of triumphing over Amanda; from this idea she entered warmly into all her mother's plans.

Lord

Lord Cherbury had never yet spoken explicitly to his son concerning the union he had projected for him; he often, indeed, dropped hints about it, which he always found either neglected, or purposely misunderstood; and from these circumstances, was pretty sensible of the disinclination Lord Mortimer felt to his wishes. He knew he entertained high notions of the independence which a rational mind has a right to maintain; and that, in an affair of such consequence, as Mortimer frequently said he considered a matrimonial connexion to be, he would neither be controuled by the opinion of others, or merely allured by the advantages of fortune.

To avoid a disagreeable argument with a son he not only loved, but respected, he sought rather, by indirect means, to involve him in an entanglement with the Rosline family, than come to an open explanation with him. For this purpose he contrived parties as often as possible with them in public; where, by Lord Mortimer's being seen with Lady Euphrasia, reports might be raised of an intended alliance between them; reports which he himself propagated among some particular friends, with a desire of having them circulated, but an injunction of secrecy as to their author. These reports would, he trusted, on reaching Lord Mortimer, lead to a discussion of the affair; and then he meant to say, as Lord Mortimer had partly contributed to raise them himself by his attendance on Lady Euphrasia, he

could not possibly, with honour, recede from realizing them. Yet often did his Lordship fear his scheme would prove abortive; for he well knew the cool judgment and keen penetration of his son. This fear always inspired him with horror, for he had a motive for desiring the union which he durst not avow.

Lord Mortimer quickly, indeed, discerned what his father's views were in promoting his attendance on Lady Euphrasia; he therefore avoided her society, whenever it was possible to do so without absolute rudeness, and contradicted the reports he almost continually heard of an intended alliance between them in the most solemn manner. He had always disliked her, but latterly that dislike was converted into hatred, from the malevolence of her conduct towards Amanda; and he felt that, even was his heart free, he never could devote it to her, or give his hand where it must be unaccompanied with esteem. He wished to avoid a disagreeable conversation with Lord Cherbury; and flattered himself, his unaltered indifference to her Ladyship would at length convince his Lordship of the impossibility of accomplishing his projected scheme, and that, consequently, it would be dropped ere openly avowed, and he saved the painful necessity of absolutely rejecting a proposal of his father's.

In the evening Lady Greystock and Amanda received cards for dinner the next day at the Marquis of Rosline's. Amanda made no objection to this invitation;

tation; her father had often declared, if the Marchioness made an overture for an intimacy with his children, he would not reject it, as he always deemed family quarrels highly prejudicial to both parties, with regard to the opinion of the world; besides, had she objected to it, she should either have been a restraint on Lady Greystock, or left to total solitude; and the idea also stole upon her mind, that she should lose a chance of seeing Lord Mortimer, who she supposed a frequent guest of the Marquis's. Her heart fluttered at the idea of soon beholding him; and the bright glow of animation which overspread her countenance, in consequence of this idea, attracted the observation of Lady Greystock, who congratulated her on the alteration that was already visible in her looks, and inferred from thence, that she was so well recovered of her fatigue as to be able to contrive a little trimming for her against the next day. This Amanda cheerfully undertook, and having a quick execution, as well as an elegant taste, soon made progress in it, which delighted her Ladyship; who, to divert her whilst she worked, related some of the many entertaining anecdotes with which her memory was stored.

Though Amanda submitted her beautiful hair to the hands of a *friseur*, she departed not from the elegant simplicity always conspicuous in her dress; her little ornaments were all arranged with taste, and an anxious wish of appearing to advantage; so lovely,

indeed, did she appear to Lady Greyflock, that her Ladyship began seriously to fear she should not be forgiven by the Marchioness or Lady Euphrasia for having introduced such an object to their parties.

About six they reached Portman-Square, and found a large party assembled in the drawing-room. After the first compliments were over, and Amanda introduced to the Marquis, not indeed as a near relation but an utter stranger, a gentleman stepped up to the Marchioness, and addressing her in a low voice, was immediately presented by her to Amanda, as the Earl of Cherbury.

"My dear young lady," said he, "allow me to express the pleasure I feel at seeing the daughter of my worthy friend, Mr. Fitzalan; allow me also to increase that pleasure," continued he, taking her hand, and leading her to a very lovely girl who sat at some distance, "by presenting Miss Fitzalan to Lady Araminta Dormer, and desiring their friendship for each other."

Surprised, confused, yet delighted by notice so little expected, the heart of Amanda heaved with emotion; her cheeks mantled with blushes, and the tear of sensibility trembled in her eye; she was not, however, so embarrassed as to be incapable of expressing her acknowledgments to his Lordship for his attention, and also to assure him, she had early been taught, and sensibly felt the claims he had upon her gratitude and respect. He bowed, as if to prevent a
further

further mention of obligations, and left her seated by his daughter, who had expressed her pleasure at being introduced to her; not in the supercilious stile of Lady Euphrasia, but in the sweet accents of affability and tenderness.

The conduct of Lord Cherbury had drawn all eyes upon Amanda; and the Marchioness and Lady Euphrasia regarded her with peculiar malignancy. The idea, however, that they could, whenever they pleased, deprive her of his notice, a little lessened the jealousy and mortification it had excited.

"Pray, who is this little creature?" exclaimed Miss Malcolm (who was a relation of the Marquis's, and from being extremely ugly, extremely rich, and extremely ill-natured, was an immense favourite of Lady Euphrasia's), "that puts one in mind of a country Miss, on her first appearance at a country assembly, blushing and trembling at every eye she meets?"

"Some kind of a far-off relation of my mother's," replied Lady Euphrasia, "who that old dowager, Lady Greystock, picked up in the wilds of Ireland, and has absolutely forced her upon our notice; though I assure you, from compassion, we should have taken the poor creature long ago under our protection, but for the shocking conduct of her family to the Marchioness, and the symptoms she has already betrayed of following their example. It is really ridiculous sending her to London: I dare say her silly old father

has exhausted all his ways and means in trying to render her decent; comforting himself, no doubt, with the hope of her entrapping some young fool of quality, who may supply his wants as well as her's."

"Aye, I suppose all the stock in the farm was sold to dress her out," cried young Freelove, a little trifling fop, who leaned on the back of her Ladyship's chair. He was a ward of Lord Cherbury's, and his fortune considerable, but nature had not been quite as bounteous to him as the blind goddess; both his mind and person were effeminate to a degree of insignificance. All he aimed at was being a man of fashion; his manners, like his dress, was therefore regulated by it, and he never attempted to approve of any thing, or any creature, till assured they were quite the ton. He had danced attendance for some time on Lady Euphrasia, and she encouraged his assiduities, in hopes of effecting a change in Lord Mortimer's manner; but had his Lordship even been a passionate lover, poor Freelove was not calculated to inspire him with jealousy.—"I declare," continued he, surveying Amanda through an opera glass, which dangled from his button-hole, "if her father has nothing to support him but the hope of her making a conquest of importance, he will be in a sad way; for, 'pon my soul, I can see nothing the girl has to recommend her, except novelty, and that, you know, is a charm which will lessen every day: all she can possibly expect

pest is an establishment for a few months with some tasteless being, who may like the simplicity of her country look. ——— ”

“ And more than the merits,” exclaimed Miss Malcolm ; “ I have no patience with such creatures forcing themselves into society quite above them.”

“ I assure you,” said Lady Euphrasia, “ you would be astonished at her vanity and conceit, if you knew her ; she considers herself a first-rate beauty, though positively any one may see she is quite the reverse, and pretends to the greatest gentleness and simplicity. Then she has made some strange kind of people (to be sure they must be) believe she is accomplished ; though I dare say, if she can read tolerably, and scrawl out a decent letter, ’tis the utmost she can do.”

“ We will quiz her after dinner about her accomplishments,” said Freelove, “ and have a little fun with her.”

“ Aye, do,” cried Miss Malcolm.—“ We will ask her to play and sing,” said her Ladyship, “ for, I assure you, she pretends to excel in both, though, from her father’s poverty, I am certain she can know little of either : I shall enjoy her confusion of all things when her ignorance is detected.”

Whilst this conversation was passing, Amanda, in conversing with Lady Araminta, experienced the purest pleasure. Her Ladyship was the “ softened image” of Lord Mostimer ; her voice was modulated

to the same harmony as his, and Amanda gazed and listened with rapture. On her confusion abating, her eye had wandered round the room in quest of his Lordship, but he was not in it. At every stir near the door, her heart fluttered at the idea of seeing him; nor was this idea relinquished till summoned to dinner. She fortunately procured a seat next Lady Araminta, which prevented her thinking the time spent at dinner tedious. In the evening the rooms were crowded with company, but Lord Mortimer appeared not among the brilliant assembly; yet the pang of disappointment was softened to Amanda by his absence, intimating that he was not anxious for the society of Lady Euphrasia;—true, business, or a prior engagement, might have prevented his coming; but she, as is natural, fixed on the idea most flattering to herself.

Lady Euphrasia, in pursuance of the plan laid against Amanda, led the way to the music-room, attended by a large party; as Freeloze had intimated to some of the beaux and belles her Ladyship and he were going to quiz an ignorant Irish country girl. Lady Euphrasia sat down to the harpsichord, that she might have a better pretext for asking Amanda to play. Freeloze seated himself by the latter, and began a conversation which he thought would effectually embarrass her; but it had quite a contrary effect, rendering him so extremely ridiculous as to excite an universal laugh at his expence.

Amanda

Amanda soon perceived his intention in addressing her, and also that Lady Euphrasia and Miss Malcolm were privy to it, having caught the significant looks which passed among them. Though tremblingly alive to every feeling of modesty, she had too much sense and real nobleness of soul to allow the illiberal sallies of impertinence to divest her of composure.

"Have you seen any of the curiosities of London, my dear?" exclaimed Free love, lolling back in his chair, and contemplating the lustre of his buckles, unconscious of the ridicule he excited.

"I think I have," said Amanda, somewhat archly, and glancing at him—"quite an original in its kind." Her look, as well as the emphasis on her words, excited another laugh at his expence, which threw him into a momentary confusion.

"I think," said he, as he recovered from it, "the Monument and the Tower would be prodigious fine sights to you; and I make it a particular request that I may be included in your party whenever you visit them, particularly the last place."

"And why," replied Amanda, "should I take the trouble of visiting wild beasts, when every day I may see animals equally strange, and not half so mischievous."

Free love, insensible as he was, could not mistake the meaning of Amanda's words, and he left her with a mortified air, being, to use his own phrase, "completely done up."

Lady Euphrasia now rising from the harpsichord, requested Amanda to take her place at it, saying, with an ironical air, her performance, which indeed was shocking, would make her's appear to amazing advantage."

Diffident of her own abilities, Amanda begged to be excused; but when Miss Malcolm, with an earnestness even oppressive, joined her entreaties to Lady Euphrasia's, she could no longer refuse.

"I suppose," said her Ladyship, following her to the instrument, "these songs," presenting some trifling ones, "will answer you better than the Italian music before you."

Amanda made no reply, but turned over the leaves of the book to a lesson much more difficult than that Lady Euphrasia had played. Her touch at first was tremulous and weak, but she was too susceptible of the powers of harmony not soon to be inspired by it; and gradually her stile became so masterly and elegant, as to excite universal admiration, except in the bosoms of those who had hoped to place her in a ludicrous situation; their invidious scheme, instead of depressing, had only served to render excellence conspicuous; and that mortification they destined for another fall upon themselves. When the lesson was concluded, some gentlemen, who either were, or pretended to be, musical connoisseurs, entreated her to sing. She chose a plaintive Italian air, and the exquisite taste and sweetness with which she sung
equally

equally astonished and delighted. Nor was admiration confined to the accomplishments she displayed; the soft expression of her countenance, which seemed according to the harmonious sounds that issued from her lips, was viewed with pleasure and praised with energy; and she rose from the harpsichord covered with blushes, from the applause which stole around her. The gentlemen gathered round Lady Euphrasia, to enquire who the beautiful stranger was; and she gave them pretty much the same account she had already done to Miss Malcolm.

The rage and disappointment of that young lady and her Ladyship could scarcely be concealed.

"I declare I never knew any thing so monstrously absurd," exclaimed Lady Euphrasia, "as to let a girl in her situation learn such things, except, indeed, it was to qualify her for a governess or an opera singer."

"Aye, I suppose," said Miss Malcolm, "we shall soon hear her quivering away at one of the theatres, for no person of fashion would really entrust her children to so confident a creature."

The fair object of their disquietude gladly accompanied Lady Araminta into another room. Several gentlemen followed, and crowded about her chair, offering that adulation which they were accustomed to find acceptable at the shrine of beauty. To Amanda, however, it was irksome, not only from its absurd extravagance, but as it interrupted her con-

versation with Lady Araminta. The Marchioness, however, who critically watched her motions, soon relieved her from the troublesome affluities of the beaus, by placing them at card-tables; not, indeed, from any good-natured motive, but she could not bear that Amanda should have so much attention paid her, and flattered herself she would be vexed by losing it.

In the course of conversation, Lady Araminta mentioned Ireland. She had a faint remembrance of Castle Carberry, she said, and had been half tempted to accompany the Marquis and his family in their late excursion; her brother, she added, had almost made her promise to visit the Castle with him the ensuing summer. "You have seen Lord Mortimer, to be sure," continued her Ladyship.

"Yes, Madam," faltered Amanda, while her face was overspread with a crimson hue. Her Ladyship was too penetrating not to perceive her confusion, and it gave rise to a conjecture of something more than a slight acquaintance being between his Lordship and Amanda. The melancholy he had betrayed on his return from Ireland had excited the raillery of her Ladyship, till convinced, by the discomposure he shewed, whenever she attempted to enquire into the occasion of it, that it proceeded from a source truly interesting to his feelings. She knew of the alliance her father had projected for him with the Rosline family, a project she never approved of, for Lady
Euphrasia

Euphrasia was truly disagreeable to her; and a soul like Mortimer's, tender, liberal, and sincere, she knew could never experience the smallest degree of happiness with a being so uncongenial in every respect as was Lady Euphrasia to him. She loved her brother with the truest tenderness, and secretly believed he was attached in Ireland. She wished to gain his confidence, yet would not solicit it, because she knew she had it not in her power essentially to serve him: her arguments, she was convinced, would have little weight with Lord Cherbury, who had often expressed to her his anxiety for a connexion with the Rosline family. With the loveliness of Amanda's person, with the elegance of her manner, she was immediately charmed; as she conversed with her, esteem was added to admiration, and she believed that Mortimer would not have omitted mentioning to her the beautiful daughter of his father's agent, had he not feared betraying too much emotion at her name. She appeared to Lady Araminta just the kind of woman she would adore, just the being that would answer all the ideas of perfection (romantic ideas she had called them) which he had declared necessary to captivate his heart. Lady Araminta already felt for her unspeakable tenderness; in the softness of her looks, in the sweetness of her voice, there were resistless charms; and she felt, that if oppressed by sorrow, Amanda Fitzalan, above all other beings, was the one she would select to give her consolation. The confusion she

she betrayed at the mention of Mortimer made her Ladyship suspect she was the cause of his dejection. She involuntarily fastened her eyes upon her face, as if to penetrate the recesses of her heart; yet with a tenderness which seemed to say she would pity the secret she might there discover.

Lord Cherbury, at this moment of embarrassment to Amanda, approached; he said he had just been making a request and an apology to Lady Greystock, and was now come to repeat them to her; the former was to meet the Marquis's family at his house the next day at dinner, and the latter was to excuse so unceremonious an invitation, which he had been induced to make on Lady Araminta's account, who was obliged to leave town the day after the next, and had therefore no time for the usual etiquette of visiting.

Amanda bowed. This invitation was more pleasing than one of mere form would have been; it seemed to indicate friendship, and a desire to have the intimacy between her and his daughter cultivated; it gave her also a hope of seeing Lord Mortimer. All these suggestions inspired her with uncommon animation, and she entered into a lively conversation with Lord Cherbury, who had infinite vivacity in his look and manner. Lady Araminta observed the attention he paid her with pleasure; a prepossession in her favour, she trusted, might produce pleasing consequences.

Lady

Lady Greystock at length rose to depart. Amanda received an affectionate adieu from Lady Araminta, and Lord Cherbury attended the ladies to their carriage. On driving off, Lady Greystock observed what a charming polite man his Lordship was; and, in short, threw out such hints, and entered into such a warm eulogium on his merits, that Amanda began to think he would not find it very difficult to prevail on her Ladyship to enter once more the temple of Hymen.

Amanda retired to her chamber in a state of greater happiness than for a long period before she had experienced; but it was a happiness which rather agitated than soothed the feelings, particularly her's, which were so susceptible of every impression, that

They turned at the touch of joy or woe,
And, turning, trembled too.

Her present happiness was the offspring of hope, and therefore peculiarly liable to disappointment; a hope derived from the attention of Lord Cherbury, and the tenderness of Lady Araminta, that the fond wishes of her heart might yet be realized; wishes, again believed, from hearing of Lord Mortimer's dejection (which his sister had touched upon), and from his absenting himself from the Marquis's, were not un congenial to those he himself entertained. She sat down to acquaint her father with the particulars of the day she had passed, for her chief consolation

solation in her absence from him was in the idea of writing and hearing constantly : her writing finished, she sat by the fire, meditating on the interview she expected would take place on the ensuing day, till the hoarse voice of the watchmen proclaiming past three o'clock, roused her from her reverie ; she smiled at the abstraction of her thoughts, and retired to bed to dream of felicity.

So calm were her slumbers, so delightful her dreams, that Sol had long shot his timorous ray into her chamber ere she awoke : her spirits still continued serene and animated. On descending to the drawing-room, she found Lady Greystock just entering it. After breakfast they went out in her Ladyship's carriage to different parts of the town ; all was new to Amanda, who, during her former residence in it, had been entirely confined to lodgings in a retired street. She wondered at, and was amused by the crowd's continually passing and repassing. About four they returned to dress. Amanda began the labours of the toilet with a beating heart ; nor were its quick pulsations decreased on entering Lady Greystock's carriage, which in a few minutes conveyed her to Lord Cherbury's house in St. James's Square. She followed her Ladyship with tottering steps ; and the first object she saw on entering the drawing-room, was Mortimer standing near the door.

CHAP.

CHAP. VIII.

Begone, my cares, I give you to the winds.

BOWS.

IN the drawing-room were already assembled the Marquis, Marchioness, Lady Euphrasia, Miss Malcolm, and Freelove. Lady Araminta perceived, in the hesitating voice of Amanda, the emotions which agitated her, and which were not diminished, when Lord Cherbury taking her trembling hand, said,

“Mortimer, I presume you have already seen Miss Fitzalan in Ireland.”

“I have, my Lord,” cried Mortimer, bowing, and at the same time approaching to pay his compliments.

Every eye in the room, except Lord Cherbury’s and Freelove’s, was now turned upon his Lordship and Amanda, and thought, in the expressive countenances of both, enough could be read to confirm their suspicions of a mutual attachment subsisting between them.

Amanda, when seated, endeavoured to recover from her confusion. Miss Malcolm, to prevent Lord Mortimer’s taking a seat by her, which she thought she perceived him inclined to do, beckoned him to her,

her, and contrived to engage him in trifling chat till they were summoned to dinner. On receiving his hand, which he could not avoid offering, to lead her to the parlour, she cast a look of exultation at Amanda. Lady Araminta, perceiving all the gentlemen engaged, good-humouredly put her arm within Amanda's, and said she would be her *chaperon* on the present occasion. Lord Mortimer quitted Miss Malcolm the moment he had procured a seat, though she desired him to take one between her and Lady Euphrasia; and passing to the other side, placed himself by Amanda. This action pleased her as much as it mortified them: it embarrassed her, however, a little; but perceiving the scrutinizing earnestness with which the Marchioness and Lady Euphrasia regarded her, she exerted her spirits, and was soon able to join in the general conversation which Lord Mortimer promoted.

The unexpected arrival of Amanda in London astonished and (notwithstanding his resentment) delighted him. His sister, when they were alone in the morning, had mentioned her with all the fervency of praise; her plaudits gave to him a sensation of satisfied pride, which convinced him he was not less than ever interested about Amanda. Since his return from Ireland, he had been distracted by incertitude and anxiety about her: the innocence, the purity, the tenderness she had displayed, were perpetually recurring to his memory; it was impossible, he thought, they could

could be feigned, and he began to think the apparent mystery of her conduct she could satisfactorily have explained; that designedly she had not avoided him; and that, but for the impetuosity of his own passions, which had induced his precipitate departure, he might, ere this, have had all his doubts removed. Tortured with incessant regret for this departure, he would have returned immediately to Ireland; but at this period found it impossible to do so, without exciting enquiries from Lord Cherbury, which at present he did not choose to answer. He had planned an excursion thither the ensuing summer with Lady Araminta, determined no longer to endure his suspense; he now almost believed it the peculiar interposition of Providence which had brought Amanda to town, thus affording him another opportunity of having his anxiety relieved, and the chief obstacle perhaps to his, and he flattered himself also to her happiness, removed; for if assured her precipitate journey from Wales was occasioned by no motive she need blush to avow, he felt he should be better enabled to combat the difficulties he was convinced his father would throw in the way of their union. Notwithstanding Lady Araminta's endeavours to gain his implicit confidence, he resolved to withhold it from her, lest she should incur even the temporary displeasure of Lord Cherbury, by the warm interest he knew she would take in his affairs, if once informed of them.

Amanda

Amanda looked thinner and paler than when he had seen her in Ireland, yet, if possible, more interesting from these circumstances; and from the soft glance she had involuntarily directed towards him at her entrance, he was tempted to think he had, in some degree, contributed to rob her lovely cheek of its bloom; and this idea rendered her dearer than ever to him. Scarcely could he restrain the rapture he felt on seeing her within the necessary bounds; scarcely could he believe the scene which had given rise to his happiness real; his heart at the moment melting with tenderness, sighed for the period of explanation, which he trusted, which he hoped, would also be the period of reconciliation.

The gentlemen joined the ladies about tea-time, and as no additional company was expected, Lady Euphrasia proposed a party to the pantheon. This was immediately agreed to. Amanda was delighted at the proposal, as it not only promised to gratify her curiosity, but to give Lord Mortimer an opportunity of addressing her, as she saw he wished but vainly attempted at home. The Marquis and Lord Cherbury declined going. Lady Greystock, who had not ordered her carriage till a much later hour, accepted a place in the Marchioness's.

Neither Lady Euphrasia nor Miss Malcolm could bear the idea of Lord Mortimer and Amanda going in the same carriage, as the presence of Lady Araminta, they were convinced, would not prevent

vent their using an opportunity, so propitious for conversing, as they wished. Lady Euphrasia, therefore, with sudden eagerness, declared, she and Miss Malcolm would resign their seats in the Marchioness's carriage to Miss Fitzalan and Freelove, for the pleasure of accompanying Lady Araminta in her's. The Marchioness, who conjectured her daughter's motive for this new arrangement, seconded it, to the secret regret of Amanda, and the visible chagrin of Lord Mortimer. Amanda, however, consoled herself for this disappointment, by reflecting on the pleasures she should enjoy in a few minutes, when freed from the disagreeable observation of the Marchioness and Lady Euphrasia; her reflections were not in the least interrupted by any conversation being addressed to her. The Marchioness and Lady Greystock chatted together, and Freelove amused himself by humming a song, as if for the purpose of mortifying Amanda by his inattention.

When the carriage stopped, he assisted the former ladies out; but, as if forgetting such a being existed as Amanda, he went on with them. She was descending the steps, when Lord Mortimer pressed forward, and snatching her hand, softly exclaimed, "We have met again, and neither envy nor malice shall again separate us." A beautiful glow overspread the countenance of Amanda; her hand trembled in his, and she felt in that moment recompensed for her former disappointment, and elevated above the little
insolence

insolence of Freelove. Lord Mortimer handed her to his sister, who was waiting to receive her, and they proceeded to the room. Lady Euphrasia entered it with a temper unfitted for enjoyment; she was convinced the whole soul of Mortimer was devoted to Amanda, and she trembled, from the violent and malignant feelings that conviction excited. From the moment he entered the carriage till he quitted it he had remained silent, notwithstanding all her efforts and Miss Malcolm's to force him into conversation. He left them, as soon as they reached the pantheon, to watch the Marchioness's carriage, which followed their's; and on rejoining Amanda, he attached himself entirely to her, without any longer appearing anxious to conceal his predilection for her. He had, indeed, forgotten the necessity there was for concealing it; all his feelings, all his ideas were engrossed by ecstasy and tenderness. The novelty, the brilliancy of the scene, excited surprise and pleasure in Amanda, and he was delighted with the animated description she gave of the effect it produced upon her mind. In her he found united exalted sense, lively fancy, and an uncorrupted taste; he forgot that the eyes of jealousy and malevolence were on them; he forgot every object but herself.

But, alas! poor Amanda was doomed to disappointment this evening. Lady Greystock, according to a hint she had received, after a few rounds, stepped up to her, and declared she must accompany her to a seat,

seat, as she was convinced her health was yet too weak to bear much fatigue. Amanda assured her she was not in the least fatigued, and that she would prefer walking; besides, she had half promised Lord Mortimer to dance with him. This Lady Greystock absolutely declared she would not consent to, though Lady Araminta, on whose arm Amanda leaned, pleaded for her friend, assuring her Ladyship she would take care Miss Fitzalan should not injure herself.

"Ah! you young people," said Lady Greystock, "are so carried away with spirits, you never reflect on consequences; but I declare, as she is entrusted to my care, I could not answer it to my conscience to let her run into any kind of danger."

Lady Araminta remonstrated with her Ladyship, and Amanda would have joined, but that she feared her real motive for doing so would have been discovered. She perceived the party were detained from proceeding on her account, and immediately offered her arm to Lady Greystock, and accompanied her and the Marchioness to a seat. Lady Euphrasia catching hold of Lady Araminta's arm, hurried her at the same instant into the crowd; and Miss Malcolm, as if by chance, laid her hand on Lord Mortimer, and thus compelled him to attend her party. She saw him, however, in the course of the round, prepared to fly off; but when they had completed it, to her inexpressible joy, the situation of Amanda made him relinquish

relinquish his intention, as to converse with her was utterly impossible, for the Marchioness had placed her between Lady Greystock and herself; and under the pretence of frequently addressing her Ladyship, was continually leaning across Amanda, so as to exclude her almost from observation; thus rendering her situation, exclusive of the regret at being separated from Lord Mortimer and Lady Araminta, highly disagreeable. The Marchioness enjoyed a malicious joy in the uneasiness she saw she gave Amanda; she deemed it but a slight retaliation for the uneasiness she had given Lady Euphrasia; a trifling punishment for the admiration she had excited.

Amanda, indeed, whilst surveying the scene around her with wonder and delight, had herself been an object of critical attention and enquiry; she was followed, universally admired, and allowed to be the finest girl that had appeared for a long season.

Relieved of her presence, Lady Euphrasia's spirits began to revive, and her good humour to return. She laughed maliciously with Miss Malcolm at the disappointment of Lord Mortimer and Amanda. After a few rounds, Sir Charles Bingley, in company with another gentleman, passed them; he was, to use Miss Malcolm's own phrase, an immense favourite with her, and she had long meditated and attempted the conquest of his heart. The attention which politeness obliged him to shew, and the compliments she sometimes compelled him to pay, she flattered herself,

herself, were intimations of the success of her scheme. Lady Euphrasia, notwithstanding her intentions relative to Lord Mortimer, and her professed friendship for Miss Malcolm, felt an ardent desire to have Sir Charles enrolled in the list of her admirers; and both ladies determined he should not again pass without noticing them. They accordingly watched his approach; and when they again met, addressed him in a manner that, to a man at all interested about either, would have been truly flattering. As this, however, was not the young Baronet's case, after paying his compliments, in a general way, to the whole party, he was making his parting bow; when his companion, pulling him by the sleeve, bid him observe a beautiful girl sitting opposite to them. They had stopped near the Marchioness's seat, and it was to Amanda Sir Charles's eyes were directed.

"Gracious Heaven!" cried he, starting, while his cheek was suffused with a glow of pleasure, "can this be possible—can this, in reality," advancing to her seat, "be Miss Fitzalan? This, surely," continued he, "is a meeting as fortunate as unexpected; but for it, I should have been posting back to Ireland in a day or two."

Amanda blushed deeply at his thus publicly declaring her power of regulating his actions. Her confusion restored that recollection his joyful surprise had deprived him of, and he addressed the Marchioness and Lady Greystock. The former haughtily bowed,

without speaking; and the latter, laughing significantly, said, "she really imagined ecstasy, on Miss Fitzalan's account, had made him forget any one else was present." The situation of Amanda was tantalizing, in an extreme degree, to Sir Charles; it precluded all conversation, and frequently hid her from his view, as the Marchioness and Lady Greystock still continued their pretended whispers. Sir Charles had some knowledge of the Marchioness's disposition, and quickly perceived the motive of her present conduct.

"Your Ladyship is kind," said he, "in trying to hide Miss Fitzalan, as no doubt you are conscious 'tis not a slight heart-ach she would give to some of the belles present this evening; but why," continued he, turning to Amanda, "do you prefer sitting to walking?"

Amanda made no answer; but a glance from her expressive eyes to the ladies informed him of the reason.

Lady Euphrasia and Miss Malcolm, provoked at the abrupt departure of Sir Charles, had hurried on; but scarcely had they proceeded a few yards, ere envy and curiosity induced them to turn back. Lady Araminta perceived their chagrin, and secretly enjoyed it. Sir Charles, who had been looking impatiently for their approach, the moment he perceived them, entreated Amanda to join them.

"Let me," cried he, presenting his hand, "be your knight on the present occasion, and deliver you from what may be called absolute captivity."

She

She hesitated not to accept his offer; the continual buzz in the room, with the passing and re-passing of the company, had made her head giddy; she deemed no apology requisite to her companions, and quitting her seat, hastened forward to Lady Araminta, who had stopped for her. A crowd at that moment intervening between them, retarded her progress. Sir Charles, pressing her hand with fervour, availed himself of this opportunity to express his pleasure at their unexpected meeting.

"Ah! how little," cried he, "did I imagine there was such happiness in store for me this evening."

"Sir Charles," said Amanda, endeavouring, though in vain, to withdraw her hand, "you have learned the art of flattering since your return to England."

"I wish," cried he, "I had learned the art of expressing as I wish the sentiments I feel."

Lord Mortimer, who had made way through the crowd for the ladies, at this instant appeared; he seemed to recoil at the situation of Amanda, whose hand was yet detained in Sir Charles's, while the soft glow and confusion of her face gave at least a suspicion of the language she was listening to.

On rejoining the party, she hoped again to have been joined by Lord Mortimer; but even, if inclined to this, Sir Charles totally prevented him. His Lordship deserted them, yet almost continually

contrived to intercept the party, and his eyes were always turned on Amanda and Sir Charles: he was really displeased with her; he thought she might as well have left her seat before as after Sir Charles's appearance, and he resolved to watch her closely. She was asked to dance by Sir Charles and several other gentlemen, but refused; and Lady Araminta, on her account, followed her example. Lady Euphrasia and Miss Malcolm either were too much discomposed, or not asked by gentlemen they liked, to join the festive group.

Amanda, from being disappointed, soon grew languid, and endeavoured to check, with more than usual seriousness, the ardent expressions of Sir Charles, who repeatedly declared he had hurried over the affairs which brought him to England entirely on her account, as he thought every day an age till they again met.

She was rejoiced when Lady Araminta proposed returning home. Lady Euphrasia and Miss Malcolm had no longer a desire to accompany her Ladyship, as they believed Lord Mortimer already gone, and she and Amanda therefore returned alone. Sir Charles was invited to supper, an invitation he joyfully accepted, and promised to follow her Ladyship as soon as he had apprised the party he came with of his intention.

Lady Araminta and Amanda arrived some time before the rest of the party; her Ladyship said, that
her

her leaving town was to attend the nuptials of a particular friend ; and was expressing her hopes that, on her return, she should often be favoured with the company of Amanda, when the door suddenly opened, and Lord Mortimer entered. He looked pleased and surprised ; and taking a seat on the sofa between them, exclaimed, as he regarded them with unutterable tenderness, " surely one moment like this is worth whole hours, such as we have lately spent. May I," looking at Amanda, " say that chance is now as propitious to me as it was some time ago to Sir Charles Bingley ? Tell me," continued he, " were you not agreeably surprised to-night ? "

" By the pantheon, undoubtedly, my Lord."

" And by Sir Charles Bingley ? "

" No ; he is too slight an acquaintance either to give pleasure by his presence, or pain by his absence."

This was just what Lord Mortimer wanted to hear. The looks of Amanda, and, above all, the manner in which she had received the attentions of Sir Charles, evinced her sincerity. The shadow of jealousy removed, Lord Mortimer recovered all his animation. Never does the mind feel so light, so truly happy, as when a painful doubt is banished from it.

" Miss Fitzalan," said Lady Araminta, recurring to what Amanda had just said, " can see few beings like herself capable of exciting immediate esteem ;

for my own part, I cannot persuade myself that she is an acquaintance of but two days; I feel such an interest in her welfare, such a sisterly regard——” She paused, and looked expressively on her brother and Amanda. His fine eyes beamed the liveliest pleasure.

“Oh, my sister!” cried he, “encourage that sisterly affection; who so worthy of possessing it as Miss Fitzalan? and who but Amanda,” continued he, passing his arm round her waist, and softly whispering to her, “shall have a right to claim it?”

The stopping of the carriages now announced the return of the party, and terminated a scene which, if much longer protracted might, by encreasing their agitation, have produced a full discovery of their feelings. The ladies were attended by Sir Charles and Frelove. The Marquis and Lord Cherbury had been out, but returned about this time; and soon after supper the company departed, Lady Araminta tenderly bidding Amanda farewell.

The cares which had so long pressed upon the heart of Amanda, and disturbed its peace, were now vanished; the whisper of Lord Mortimer had assured her that she was not only the object of his tenderest affection, but most serious attention; the regard of Lady Araminta flattered her pride, as it implied a tacit approbation of her brother's choice.

The next morning, immediately after breakfast, Lady Greystock went out to her lawyer, and Amanda was sitting at work in the dressing-room, when Sir

Charles

Charles Bingley was announced. He now expressed, if possible, more pleasure at seeing her than he done the preceding night; congratulated himself at finding her alone, and repeatedly declared, from their first interview, her image had never been absent from his mind. The particularity and ardour of his expressions Amanda wished, and endeavoured to repress: she had not the ridiculous and unfeeling vanity to be delighted with an attachment she could not return; besides, his attentions were unpleasing, as she believed they gave uneasiness to Lord Mortimer; she therefore answered him with cold and studied caution, which, to his impetuous feelings, was insupportable.—Half repenting, half rallying it, he snatched her hand, in spite of her efforts to prevent him, and was declaring he could not bear it, when the door opened, and Lord Mortimer appeared. Had Amanda been encouraging the regard of Sir Charles she could not have betrayed more confusion. Lord Mortimer retreated a few steps, in evident embarrassment; then, bowing coolly, again advanced and took a seat. Sir Charles started up, with a look which seemed to say he had been most unpleasantly interrupted, and walked about the room. Amanda was the first who broke silence; she asked, in a hesitating voice, whether Lady Araminta was yet gone?"

"No," his Lordship gravely replied, "but in a few minutes she proposed setting out, and he meant to accompany her part of the way."

“ So, till her Ladyship was ready,” cried Sir Charles, with quickness, “ that no time might be lost, you come to Miss Fitzalan ? ”

Lord Mortimer made no reply ; he frowned, and rising directly, slightly saluted Amanda, and retired.

Convinced, as she was, that Lord Mortimer had made the visit for the purpose of speaking more explicitly than he had yet done, she could not entirely conceal her chagrin, or regard Sir Charles without some displeasure ; it had not, however, the effect of making him shorten his visit ; he continued with her till Lady Greystock's return, to whom he proposed a party that evening for the opera, and obtained permission to wait upon her Ladyship at tea with tickets, notwithstanding Amanda declared her disinclination to going : she wished to avoid the public as well as private attentions of Sir Charles ; but both she found impossible to do. The impression which the charms of her mind and form had made on him was of too ardent, too permanent a nature to be erased by her coldness. Generous and exalted in his notions, affluent and independent in his fortune, he neither required any addition of wealth, nor was under any controul which could prevent his following his inclinations ; his heart was bent on an union with Amanda ; though hurt by her indifference, he would not allow himself to be discouraged by it ; time and perseverance, he trusted and believed, would conquer it. Unaccustomed to disappointment, he could not, in
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an affair which so materially concerned his happiness, bear the idea of proving unsuccessful. Had Amanda's heart been disengaged, he would probably have succeeded as he wished; for he was calculated to please, to inspire admiration and esteem; and Amanda felt a real friendship for him, and sincerely grieved that his ardent regard could not be reduced to as temperate a medium as her's.

Lady Greystock had a numerous and brilliant acquaintance in London, amongst whom she was continually engaged. Sir Charles was well known to them, and therefore almost constantly attended Amanda wherever she went. His unremitting and particular attention excited universal observation; and he was publicly declared the professed admirer of Lady Greystock's beautiful companion. The appellation was generally bestowed on her by the gentlemen; as many of Lady Greystock's female intimates declared, from the appearance of the girl, as well as her distressed situation, they wondered Sir Charles Bingley could ever think about her; for her Ladyship had represented her as a person in the most indigent circumstances, on which account she had taken her under her protection. All that envy, hatred, and malice, could suggest against her, Miss Malcolm said. The Marchioness and Lady Euphrasia, judging of her by themselves, supposed that, as she was not sure of Lord Mortimer, she would accept of Sir Charles; and though this measure would remove all apprehen-

sions relative to Lord Mortimer, yet the idea of the wealth and consequence she would derive from it almost distracted them. Thus does envy sting the bosoms which harbour it.

Lord Mortimer again resumed his reserve; he was frequently in company with Amanda, but never even attempted to pay her any attention; yet his eyes, which she often caught rivetted on her, though the moment she perceived them they were withdrawn, seemed to say, that the alteration in his manner was not produced by any diminution of tenderness. He was, indeed, determined to regulate his conduct by her's to Sir Charles; though pained and irritated by his assiduities, he had too much pride to declare a prior claim to her regard; a woman who could waver between two objects, he deemed unworthy of either. He therefore resolved to leave Amanda free to act, and put her constancy to a kind of test; yet notwithstanding all his pride, we believe, if not pretty well convinced, that this test would have proved a source of triumph to himself, he never would have submitted to it. The period for Lady Araminta's return was now arrived, and Amanda was anxiously expecting her, when she heard from Lady Euphrasia that her Ladyship had been ill in the country, and would not therefore leave it for some time. This was a severe disappointment to Amanda, who had hoped, by her Ladyship's means, to have seen less of Sir Charles, and more of Lord Mortimer.

CHAP.

CHAP. IX..

And why should such, within herself, she cried,
Lack the lost wealth a thousand want beside.

PARNEL.

AMANDA was sitting alone in the drawing-room one morning, when a gentleman was shewn into it, to wait for Lady Greystock. The stranger was about the middling period of life; his dress announced him a military man, and his thread-bare coat seemed to declare, that whatever laurels he had gathered, they were barren ones. His form and face were interesting; infirmity appeared to press upon one, and sorrow had deeply marked the other; yet without despoiling it of a certain expression which indicated the hilarity nature had once stamped upon it; his temples were sunk, and his cheek faded to a sickly hue. Amanda felt immediate respect and sensibility for the interesting figure before her; the feelings of her soul, the early lessons of her youth, had taught her to reverence distress; and never, perhaps, did she think it so peculiarly affecting as when in a military garb.

The day was uncommonly severe, and the stranger shivered with the cold.

"I declare, young lady," cried he, as he took the chair which Amanda had placed for him by the fire, "I think I should not tremble more before an enemy than I do before this day; I don't know but what it is as essential for a subaltern officer to stand cold as well as fire."

Amanda smiled, and resumed her work: she was busily employed making a trimming of artificial flowers for Lady Greystock, to present to a young lady, from whose family she had received some obligations. This was a cheap mode of returning them, as Amanda's materials were used.

"Your employment is an entertaining one," said the stranger, "and your roses literally without thorns; such, no doubt, as you expect to gather in your path through life."

"No," replied Amanda, "I have no such expectation."

"And yet," said he, "how few at your time of life, particularly if possessed of your advantages, could make such a declaration."

"Whoever had reflection undoubtedly would," replied Amanda.

"That I allow," cried he; "but how few do we find with reflection? From the young it is banished, as the rigid tyrant, that would forbid the enjoyment of the pleasures they pant after; and from the old it
is

is too often expelled, as an enemy to that forgetfulness which can alone ensure their tranquillity."

"But in both, I trust," said Amanda, "you will allow there are exceptions."

"Perhaps there are; yet often, when conscience has no reason to dread, sensibility has cause to fear reflection; which not only revives the recollection of happy hours, but inspires such a regret for their loss, as almost unfits the soul for any exertions. 'Tis indeed beautifully described in these lines—

Still importunate and vain,
To former joys recurring ever,
And turning all the past to pain."

Amanda attentively watched him, and thought what he said appeared particularly applicable to himself, as his countenance assumed a more dejected expression. He revived, however, in a few moments.

"I have, my dear young lady," continued he, smiling, "beguiled you most soberly, as Lady Grace says, into conversation. I have, however, given you an opportunity of amusing your fancy, by drawing a comparison between an old veteran and a young soldier; but though you may allow him more animation, I trust you will not do me so much injustice as to allow him more taste, while he merely extolled the lustre of your eyes, I should admire the mildness which tempered that lustre; while he praised the glow

of your cheek, I should adore that sensibility which had power in a moment to augment or diminish it."

At this instant Lady Greystock entered the room; she entered it with the swell of importance, and a haughty expression of contempt in her features.

The stranger rose from his chair, and his paleness encreased.

"So, Mr. Rushbrook," at last drawled out her Ladyship—"so, Sir—but pray be seated," waving her hand at the same time.

Amanda now retired; she had lingered a few moments in the room, under the pretence of putting her work out of her Ladyship's way, to discover who the stranger was.

Rushbrook had been represented to her as artful, treacherous, and contemptible. His appearance was almost a sufficient refutation of those charges, and she began to think they never would have been laid against him by any other being than Lady Greystock, from a desire of depreciating her adversary. In her Ladyship she had seen much to dislike since she resided with her; she saw that the temper, like the person, is often allowed to be in dishabille at home.

She felt even warmly interested about Rushbrook; she had heard of his large family; and from his appearance she conjectured they must be in distress. There was a kind of humorous sadness in his manner, which affected her even more than a settled melancholy perhaps would have done, as it implied
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the efforts of a noble heart to repel sorrow; and if there cannot be a more noble, neither surely can there be a more affecting sight, than that of a good and brave man struggling with adversity.

As she leaned pensively against the window, reflecting on the various inequalities of fortune, yet still believing they were designed by a wise Providence, like hill and valley, mutually to benefit each other, she saw Rushbrook cross the street: his walk was the slow and lingering walk of dejection and disappointment; he raised his hand to his eyes, Amanda supposed to wipe away his tears, and her own fell at the supposition. The severity of the day had increased, a heavy shower of snow was falling, against which poor Rushbrook had no shelter but his thread-bare coat. Amanda was unutterably affected; and when he disappeared from her sight, she fell into a sentimental soliloquy, something in the style of Yorick.

"Was I mistress," exclaimed she, as she beheld the splendid carriages passing and repassing—"was I mistress of one of those carriages, an old soldier, like Rushbrook, should not be exposed to the inclemency of a wintry sky; neither should his coat be thread-bare, or his heart oppressed with anguish; if I saw a tear upon his cheek, I would say it had no business there, for comfort was about revisiting him." As she spoke, the idea of Lord Mortimer occurred; her tears were suspended, and her cheek began to glow.

"Yes,

"Yes, poor Rushbrook," she exclaimed, "perhaps the period is not far distant, when a bounteous Providence, through the hands of Amanda, may relieve thy wants; when Mortimer himself may be her assistant in the office of benevolence."

Lady Greystock's woman now appeared, to desire she would come down to her lady. She immediately obeyed the summons, with a secret hope of hearing something of the conference. Her Ladyship received her with an exulting laugh.

"I have good news to tell you, my dear," exclaimed she; "that poor wretch, Rushbrook, has lost the friend who was to have supported him in the law-suit; and the lawyers, finding the sheet-anchor gone, have steered off, and left him to shift for himself: the miserable creature and his family must certainly starve. Only think of his assurance; he came to say, indeed, he would now be satisfied with a compromise."

"Well, Madam," said Amanda.

"Well, Madam," repeated her Ladyship, mimicking her manner, "I told him I must be a fool indeed if ever I consented to such a thing, after his effrontery in attempting to litigate the will of his much abused uncle, my dear good Sir Geoffry. No, no, I bid him proceed in the suit, as all my lawyers were prepared; and after so much trouble on both sides, it would be a pity the thing came to nothing."

"As

"As your Ladyship, however, knows his extreme distress, no doubt you will relieve it."

"Why pray," said her Ladyship, smartly, "do you think he has any claim upon me?"

"Yes," replied Amanda, "if not upon your justice, at least upon your humanity."

"So you would advise me to fling away my money upon him?"

"Yes," replied Amanda, smiling, "I would; and as your Ladyship likes the expression, have you fling it away profusely."

"Well, well," answered she, "when you arrive at my age, you will know the real value of wealth."

"I trust, Madam," said Amanda, with spirit, "I know its real value already; we only estimate it differently."

"And pray," asked her Ladyship, with a sneer, "how may you estimate it?"

"As the means, Madam, of dispensing happiness around us; of giving shelter to the 'houseless child of want,' and joy to the afflicted heart; as a sacred deposit entrusted to us by an Almighty Power for those purposes; which, if so applied, will nourish placid and delightful reflections, that, like soothing friends, will crowd around us in the bed of sickness, or death, alleviating the pains of one, and the terrors of the other."

"Upon,

“Upon my word,” exclaimed Lady Greystock, “a fine flowery speech, and well calculated for a sentimental novel, or a moral treatise for the improvement of youth; but I advise you, my dear, in future, to keep your queer and romantic notions to yourself, or else it will be suspected you have made romances your study, for you have just spoken as one of their heroines would have done.”

Amanda made no reply; yet as she beheld her Ladyship seated in an easy chair, by a blazing fire, with a large bowl of rich soup before her, which she took every morning, she could not forbear secretly exclaiming—“Hard-hearted woman, engrossed by your own gratifications, no ray of compassion can soften your nature for the misfortunes of others! sheltered yourself from the tempest, you see it falling without pity on the head of wretchedness; and while you feast on luxuries, think, without emotion, on those who want even common necessaries.”

In the evening they went to a large party at the Marchioness's; but though the scene was gay and brilliant, it could not remove the pensiveness of Amanda's spirits; the emaciated form of Rushbrook, returning to his desolate family, dwelt upon her mind. A little, she thought, as she surveyed the magnificence of the apartments, and the splendour of the company which crowded them, a little from this parade of vanity and wealth would give relief to many a child.

child of indigence. Never had the truth of the following lines so forcibly struck her imagination :—

Ah ! little think the gay licentious proud,
Whom pleasure, power, and affluence, surround ;
They, who their thoughtless hours in giddy mirth,
And wanton, often cruel, riot waste :
Ah ! little think they, while they dance along,
How many feel, this very moment, death,
And all the sad variety of pain.

How many drink the cup
Of baleful grief, or eat the bitter bread
Of misery. Sore pierc'd by wintry winds,
How many shrink into the sordid hut
Of cheerless poverty !

From such reflections as these she was disturbed by the entrance of Sir Charles Bingley. As usual, he took his station by her, and in a few minutes after him Lord Mortimer appeared. A party for *vingt-un* was formed, in which Amanda joined, from a wish of avoiding the assiduities of Sir Charles ; but he took care to secure a seat next her's, and Lord Mortimer sat opposite to them.

" Bingley," said a gentleman, after they had been some time at the table, " you are certainly the most changeable fellow in the world. About three weeks ago you were hurrying every thing for a journey to Ireland, as if life and death depended on your expedition, and here I still find you loitering about the town."

" I deny

“ I deny the imputation of changeableness,” replied the Baronet : “ all my actions are regulated,” and he glanced at Amanda, “ by one source, one object.”

Amanda blushed, and caught at that moment a penetrating look from Lord Mortimer.

Her situation was extremely disagreeable; she dreaded his attentions would be imputed to encouragement from her : she had often tried to suppress them, and she resolved her next efforts should be more resolute.

Sir Charles reached Pall-Mall the next morning just as Lady Greystock was stepping into her chariot, to acquaint her lawyer of Rushbrook’s visit. She informed him that Miss Fitzalan was in the drawing-room, and he flew up to her.

“ You find,” said he, “ by what you heard last night, that my conduct has excited some surprise; I assure you my friends think I must absolutely be deranged to relinquish so suddenly a journey I appeared so anxious to take; suffer me,” continued he, taking her hand, “ to assign the true reason for this apparent change.”

“ Sir Charles,” replied Amanda, “ ’tis time to terminate this trifling.”

“ Oh let it then be terminated,” said he, with eagerness, “ by your consenting to my happiness—by your accepting a hand, tendered to you with the most ardent affections of my heart,”

With

With equal delicacy and tenderness he then urged her acceptance of proposals, which were as disinterested as the most romantic generosity could desire them to be.

Amanda felt really concerned that he had made them; the grateful sensibility of her nature was hurt at the idea of giving him pain.

"Believe me, Sir Charles," said she, "I am truly sensible of the honour of your addresses; but I should deem myself unworthy of the favourable opinion which excited them, if I delayed a moment assuring you, that friendship was the only return in my power to make for them."

The impetuous passions of Sir Charles were now all in commotion; he started from his chair, and traversed the apartment in breathless agitation.

"I will not, Miss Fitzalan," said he, resuming his seat again, "believe you inflexible; I will not believe that you can think I shall so easily resign an idea which I have so long cherished with rapture."

"Surely, Sir Charles," said she, somewhat alarmed, "you cannot accuse me of having encouraged that idea?"

"Oh no!" sighed he, passionately, "to me you were always uniformly cold."

"And from whence then proceeded such an idea?"

"From the natural propensity we all have to deceive ourselves, and to believe that whatever we wish will be accomplished. Ah, Miss Fitzalan, deprive
me

me not of so sweet a belief! I will not at present urge you to any material step to which you are averse; I will only entreat for permission to hope, that time, perseverance, unremitted attention, may make some impression on you, and at last produce a change in my favour."

"Never, Sir Charles, will I give rise to a hope which I think cannot be realized; a little reflection will convince you, you should not be displeased at my being so explicit. We are at this moment both, perhaps, too much discomposed to render a longer conference desirable; pardon me, therefore, if I now terminate it; and be assured, I shall never lose a grateful remembrance of the honour you intended me, or forget the friendship I professed for Sir Charles Bingley."

She then withdrew, without any obstruction from him; regret and disappointment seemed to have suspended his faculties, but it was a momentary suspension; and on recovering them, he quitted the house.

His pride at first urged him to give up Amanda forever; but his tenderness soon opposed this resolution. He had, as he himself acknowledged, a propensity to believe, that whatever he wished was easy to accomplish: this propensity proceeded from the easiness with which his inclinations had hitherto been gratified. Flattering himself, that the coldness of Amanda proceeded more from natural reserve than particular
indifference

indifference to him, he still hoped she might be induced to favour him. She was so superior, in his opinion, to every woman he had seen, so truly calculated to render him happy, that, as the violence of offended pride abated, he resolved, without another effort, not to give her up. Without knowing it, he had rambled to St. James's Square; and having heard of the friendship subsisting between Lord Cherbury and Fitzalan, he deemed his Lordship a proper person to apply to on the present occasion, thinking that, if he interested himself in his favour, he might yet be successful. He accordingly repaired to his house, and was shewn into an apartment where the Earl and Lord Mortimer were sitting together. After paying the usual compliments, "I am come, my Lord," said he, somewhat abruptly, "to entreat your interest in an affair which materially concerns my happiness, and trust your Lordship will excuse my entreaty, when I inform you it relates to Miss Fitzalan."

The Earl, with much politeness, assured him he should feel happy in an opportunity of serving him; and said, "he did him but justice in supposing him particularly interested about Miss Fitzalan, not only as the daughter of his old friend, but from her own great merit."

Sir Charles then acquainted him of the proposals he had just made her, and her absolute rejection of them;

them; and expressed his hope that Lord Cherbury would try to influence her in his favour.

“ ’Tis very extraordinary indeed,” cried his Lordship, “ that Miss Fitzalan should decline such an honourable, such an advantageous proposal. Are you sure, Sir Charles, there is no prior attachment in the case ? ”

“ I never heard of one, my Lord, and I believe none exists.” Lord Mortimer’s countenance loured at this, but happily its gloom was unperceived.

“ I will write to-day,” said the Earl, “ to Mr. Fitzalan, and mention your proposal to him in the terms it deserves; except authorised by him, you must, Sir Charles, excuse my personal interference in the affair. I have no doubt, indeed, but he will approve of your addresses, and you may then depend on my seconding them with all my interest.”

This promise satisfied Sir Charles, and he soon after withdrew. Lord Mortimer was now pretty well convinced of the state of Amanda’s heart; under this conviction, he delayed not many minutes after Sir Charles’s departure going to Pall-Mall; and having particularly enquired whether Lady Greystock was out, and being answered in the affirmative, he ascended to the drawing-room, to which Amanda had again returned.

CHAP. X.

Go bid the needle its dear north forsake,
To which with trembling rev'rence it does bend ;
Go bid the stones a journey upward make ;
Go bid th' ambitious flame no more ascend :
And when these false to their old motions prove,
Then will I cease thee, thee alone, to love.

COWLEY.

IN an emotion of surprise at so unexpected a visit, the book she was reading dropped from Amanda, and she arose in visible agitation.

"I fear," said his Lordship, "I have intruded somewhat abruptly upon you ; but my apology for doing so must be my ardent wish of using an opportunity so propitious for a mutual eclairecissement ; an opportunity I might, perhaps, vainly seek again."

He took her trembling hand, led her to the sofa, and placed himself by her. As a means of leading to the desired eclairecissement, he related the agonies he had suffered at returning to Tudor Hall, and finding her gone—gone in a manner so inexplicable, that the more he reflected on it the more wretched he grew. He described the hopes and fears which alternately fluctuated in his mind during his continuance

tinuance in Ireland, and which often drove him into a state nearly bordering on distraction. He mentioned the resolution (though painful in the extreme) which he had adopted on the first appearance of Sir Charles Bingley's particularity; and finally concluded, by assuring her, notwithstanding all his incertitude and anxiety, his tenderness had never known diminution.

Encouraged by this assurance, Amanda, with restored composure, informed him of the reason of her precipitate journey from Wales, and the incidents which prevented her meeting him in Ireland, as he had expected; though delicacy forbade her dwelling, like Lord Mortimer, on the wretchedness occasioned by their separation, and mutual misapprehensions of each other; she could not avoid touching upon it sufficiently indeed to convince him she had been a sympathizing participater in all the uneasiness he had suffered.

Restored to the confidence of Mortimer, Amanda appeared dearer to his soul than ever; pleasure beamed from his eyes as he pressed her to his bosom, and exclaimed, "I may again call you my own Amanda; again sketch scenes of felicity, and call upon you to realize them." Yet, in the midst of this transport, a sudden gloom clouded his countenance; and after gazing on her some minutes with pensive tenderness, he fervently exclaimed, "Would to Heaven, in this hour of perfect reconciliation, I could say that all obstacles to our future happiness were removed!"

Amanda

Amanda involuntarily shuddered, and continued silent.

"That my father will throw difficulties in the way of our union, I cannot deny my apprehension of," said Lord Mortimer; "though truly noble and generous in his nature, he is sometimes, like the rest of mankind, influenced by interested motives; he has long, from such motives, set his heart on a connection with the Marquis of Rosline's family; though fully determined in my intentions, I have hitherto forborne an explicit declaration of them to him, trusting that some propitious chance would yet second my wishes, and save me the painful necessity of disturbing the harmony which has ever subsisted between us."

"Oh, my Lord!" said Amanda, turning pale, and shrinking from him, "let me not be the unfortunate cause of disturbing that harmony: comply with the wishes of Lord Cherbury, marry Lady Euphrasia, and let me be forgotten."

"Amanda," cried his Lordship, "accuse not yourself of being the cause of any disagreement between us; had I never seen you, with respect to Lady Euphrasia, I should have felt the same inability to comply with his wishes. To me her person is not more unpleasing than her mind; I have long been convinced that wealth alone was insufficient to bestow felicity, and have ever considered the man, who could sacrifice his feelings at the shrine of interest or ambition, degraded below the standard of humanity;

that to marry merely from selfish considerations, was one of the most culpable, most contemptible actions which could be committed; to enter into such an union, I want the propensities which can alone ever occasion it; namely, a violent passion for the enjoyments only attainable through the medium of wealth. Left at an early age uncontrouled master of my own actions, I drank freely of the cup of pleasure, but found it soon pall upon my taste; it was, indeed, unmixed with any of those refined ingredients which can only please the intellectual appetite, and might properly be termed the cup of false, instead of real, pleasure. Thinking, therefore, as I do, that an union, without love, is abhorrent to probity and sensibility, and that the dissipated pleasures of life are not only prejudicial but tiresome, I naturally wish to secure to myself domestic happiness; but never could it be experienced, except united to a woman whom my reason thoroughly approved, who should at once possess my unbounded confidence and tenderest affection; who should be not only the promoter of my joys, but the assuager of my cares. In you I have found such a woman; such a being as I candidly confess, some time ago, I thought it impossible to meet with: to you I am bound by a sentiment even stronger than love, by honour, and with real gratitude acknowledge my obligations, in being permitted to atone, in some degree, for my errors relative to you; but I will not allow my Amanda to suppose these

errors

errors proceeded from any settled depravity of soul. Allowed to be, as I have before said, my own master at an early period, from the natural thoughtlessness of youth, I was led into scenes which the judgment of riper years has since severely condemned. Here too often I met with women, whose manners, instead of checking, gave a latitude to freedom; women, too, who, from their situations in life, had every advantage that could be requisite for improving and refining their minds; from conversing with them, I gradually imbibed a prejudice against the whole sex, and under that prejudice first beheld you, and feared either to doubt or to believe the reality of the innocence you appeared to possess.

“Convinced at length most fully, most happily convinced of its reality, my prejudices no longer remained; they vanished like mists before the sun, or rather like the illusions of falsehood before the influence of truth. Were those, my dear Amanda, of your sex, who, like you, had the resistless power of pleasing, to use the faculties assigned them by a bounteous Providence in the cause of virtue, they would soon check the dissipation of the times.

“’Tis impossible to express the power a beautiful form has over the human mind; that power might be exerted for nobler purposes: purity speaking from love-inspiring lips would, like the voice of Adam’s heavenly guest, so sweetly breathe upon the ear, as insensibly to influence the heart; the libertine it

corrected would, if not utterly hardened, reform; no longer would he glory in his vices, but, touched and abashed, instead of destroying, worship female virtue.

“But I wander from the purpose of my soul, convinced as I am of the dissimilarity between my father’s inclinations and mine, I think it better to give no intimation of my present intentions, which, if permitted by you, I am unalterably determined on fulfilling, as I should consider it as highly insulting to him to incur his prohibition, and then act in defiance of it, though my heart would glory in avowing its choice. The peculiar circumstances I have just mentioned will, I trust, induce my Amanda to excuse a temporary concealment of it, till beyond the power of mortals to separate us;—a private and immediate union, the exigency of situation and the security of felicity demands. I shall feel a trembling apprehension till I call you mine; life is too short to permit the waste of time in idle scruples and unmeaning ceremonies; the eye of suspicion has long rested upon us, and would, I am convinced, effect a premature discovery, if we took not some measure to prevent it.

“Deem me not too precipitate, my Amanda,” passing his arm gently round her waist, “if I ask you to-morrow night, for the last sweet proof of confidence you can give me, by putting yourself under my protection. A journey to Scotland is unavoidable;
able;

able ; in the arrangements I shall make for it, all that is due to delicacy I shall consider."

"Mention it no more, my Lord," said Amanda, in a faltering accent ; "no longer delude your imagination or mine with the hopes of being united."

Hitherto she had believed the approbation of Lord Cherbury to the wishes of his son would be obtained ; the moment she was convinced how essential their gratification was to his felicity, she judged of him by her father, who, she was convinced, if situations were reversed, would bestow her on Mortimer without hesitation. These ideas so nourished her attachment, that, like the vital parts of existence, it at length became painfully, almost fatally susceptible of every shock. Her dream of happiness was over the moment she heard Lord Cherbury's consent was not to be asked, from a fear of its being refused : it was misery to be separated from Lord Mortimer, but it was guilt and misery to marry him clandestinely, after the solemn injunction her father had given her against such a step. The shock of disappointment could not be borne with composure ; it pressed like a cold dead weight upon her heart ; she trembled, and unable to support herself, sunk against the shoulder of Lord Mortimer, while a shower of tears proclaimed her agony. Alarmed by her emotion, Lord Mortimer hastily demanded its source, and the reason of the words which had just escaped her.

H 4

"Because,

"Because, my Lord," replied she, "I cannot consent to a clandestine measure, nor hear you should incur the displeasure of Lord Cherbury on my account. Though Lady Euphrasia Sutherland is not agreeable, there are many women who, with equal rank and fortune, possess the perfections suited to your taste. Seek for one of these; choose from among them a happy daughter of prosperity, and let Amanda, untitled, unportioned, and unpleasing to your father, return to an obscurity which owes its comforts to his fostering bounty."—"Does this advice," asked Lord Mortimer, "proceed from Amanda's heart?"—"No," replied she, hesitatingly, and smiling through her tears, "not from her heart, but from a better counsellor, her reason."

"And shall I not obey the dictates of reason," replied he, "in uniting my destiny to yours? Reason directs us to seek happiness through virtuous means: and what means are so adapted for that purpose as an union with a beloved and amiable woman? No, Amanda, no titled daughter of prosperity, to use your own words, shall ever attract my affections from you; 'Imagination cannot form a shape, besides your own, to like of;' a shape which, even if despoiled of its graces, would enshrine a mind so transcendantly lovely, as to secure my admiration. In choosing you as the partner of my future days, I do not infringe the moral obligation which exists between father and son; for as, on one hand, it does not require weak indulgence,

indulgence, so, on the other, it does not demand implicit obedience, if reason and happiness must be sacrificed by it. Nothing would have tempted me to propose a private union, but the hope of escaping many disagreeable circumstances by it; if you persist, however, in rejecting it, I shall openly avow my intentions, for a longer continuance of anxiety and suspense I cannot support."

"Do you think, then," said Amanda, "I would enter your family amidst confusion and altercation? No, my Lord, rashly or clandestinely I never will consent to enter it."

"Is this the happiness I promised myself would crown our reconciliation?" exclaimed Lord Mortimer, rising hastily, and traversing the apartment. "Is an obstinate adherence to rigid punctilio the only proof of regard I shall receive from Amanda? Will she make no trifling sacrifice to the man who adores her, and whom she professes to esteem?"

"Any sacrifice, my Lord, compatible with virtue and filial duty, most willingly would I make; but beyond these limits I must not, cannot, will not step. Cold, joyless, and unworthy of your acceptance would be the hand you would receive, if given against my conviction of what was right. Oh, never may the hour arrive in which I should blush to see my father: in which I should be accused of injuring the honour entrusted to my charge, and feel oppressed with the consciousness of having planted

thorns in the breast that depended on me for happiness."

"Do not be too inflexible, my Amanda," cried Lord Mortimer, resuming his seat, "nor suffer too great a degree of refinement to involve you in wretchedness; felicity is seldom attained without some pain; a little resolution on your side would overcome any difficulties that lay between us and it; when the act was past, my father would naturally lose his resentment, from perceiving its inefficacy, and family concord would speedily be restored. Araminta adores you; with rapture would she receive her dear and lovely sister to her bosom; your father, happy in your happiness, would be convinced his notions heretofore were too scrupulous, and that, in complying with my wishes, you had neither violated your own delicacy, or tarnished his honour."

"Ah, my Lord! your arguments have not the effect you desire; I cannot be deluded by them, to view things in the light you wish; to unite myself clandestinely to you would be to fly in the face of parental authority; to be proposed to Lord Cherbury, when almost certain of a refusal, would not only subject me to insult, but dissolve the friendship which has hitherto subsisted between his Lordship and my father. Situated as we are, our only expedient is to separate; 'tis absurd to think longer of a connection against which there are such obstacles: the task of trying to forget will be easier to you, my
Lord,

Lord, than you now perhaps imagine; the scenes you must be engaged in are well calculated to expunge painful remembrances; in the retirement my destiny has doomed me to, my efforts will not be wanting to render me equally successful."

The tears trickled down Amanda's pale cheeks as she spoke; she believed that they must part, and the belief was attended with a pang of unutterable anguish: pleased and pained by her sensibility, Lord Mortimer bent forward, and looked in her face.

"Are these tears," said he, "to enforce me to the only expedient you say remains?—Ah, my Amanda!" clasping her to his breast, "the task of forgetting you could never be accomplished, could never be attempted; life would be tasteless if not spent with you; never will I relinquish the delightful hope of an union yet taking place.—A sudden thought," resumed he, after pausing a few minutes, "has just occurred: I have an aunt, the only remaining sister of Lord Cherbury, a generous, tender, exalted woman; I have ever been her particular favourite; my Amanda, I know, is the very kind of being she would select, if the choice devolved on her, for my wife: she is now in the country; I will write immediately, inform her of our situation, and entreat her to come up to town, to use her influence with my father in our favour. Her fortune is large, from the bequest of a rich relation; and from the generosity of her disposition, I have no doubt she would render the loss of Lady

Euphrasia's fortune very immaterial to her brother. This is the only scheme I can possibly devise for the completion of our happiness, according to your notions, and I hope it meets your approbation."

It appeared, indeed, a feasible one to Amanda; and as it could not possibly excite any ideas unfavourable to her father's integrity, she gave her consent to its being tried.

Her heart felt relieved of an oppressive load, as the hope revived that it might be accomplished. Lord Mortimer wiped away her tears; and the cloud which hung over them both being dispersed, they talked with pleasure of future days.

Lord Mortimer described the various schemes he had planned for their mode of life. Amanda smiled at the easiness with which he contrived them, and secretly wished he might find it as easy to realize as to project.

"Though the retired path of life," said he, "might be more agreeable to us than the frequented and public one, we must make some little sacrifice of inclination to the community to which we belong. On an elevated station, and affluent fortune, there are claims from subordinate ranks, which cannot be avoided without injuring them; neither should I wish to hide the beautiful gem I shall possess in obscurity; but after a winter of what I call moderate dissipation, we will hasten to the sequestered shades of Tudor Hall." He dwelt with pleasure on the

calm and rational joys they should experience there ; nor could forbear hinting at the period, when new tenderneſſes, new ſympathies, would be awakened in their ſouls ; when little prattling beings ſhould frolick before them, and literally ſrew roſes in their paths. He expreſſed his wiſh of having Fitzalan a conſtant reſident with them ; and was proceeding to mention ſome alterations he intended at Tudor Hall, when the return of Lady Greyſtock's carriage effectually diſturbed him.

Lord Mortimer, however, had time to aſſure Amanda, ere ſhe entered the room, that he had no doubt but every thing would be ſoon ſettled according to their wiſhes ; and that he would take every opportunity her Ladyſhip's abſence gave him of viſiting her.

"So, ſo," ſaid Lady Greyſtock, coming into the room, "this has been Miſs Fitzalan's levee-day ; why I declare, my dear, now that I know of the agreeable *tête-à-tête* you can enjoy, I ſhall feel no uneaſineſs at leaving you to yourſelf."

Amanda bluſhed deeply, and Lord Mortimer thought in this ſpeech he perceived a degree of irony, which ſeemed to ſay all was not right in the ſpeaker's heart towards Amanda ; and on this account he felt more anxious than ever to have her under his own protection. Animated by the idea that this would ſoon be the caſe, he told her Ladyſhip, ſmiling, ſhe would

would be obliged to him, or any other person, who could relieve her mind from uneasiness, and departed.

This had been a busy and interesting day to Amanda; and the variety of emotions it had given rise to, produced a languor in her mind and frame she could not shake off.

Her expectations were not as sanguine as Lord Mortimer's. Once severely disappointed, she dreaded again to give too great a latitude to hope; happiness was in view, but she doubted much whether it would ever be within her reach; yet the pain of suspense she endeavoured to alleviate, by reflecting that every event was under the direction of a Superior Being, who knew best what would constitute the felicity of his creatures.

Lady Greystock learned from her maid the length of Lord Mortimer's visit; and she was convinced, from that circumstance, as well as from the looks and absent manner of Amanda, that something material had happened in the course of it. In the evening they were engaged to a party; and ere they separated after dinner to dress for it, a plain-looking woman was shewn into the room, who Amanda instantly recollected to be the person at whose house she and her father had lodged, on quitting Devonshire, to secrete themselves from Colonel Belgrave. This woman had been bribed to serve him, and had forced several letters upon Amanda, who therefore naturally abhorred the sight of a person that had joined in so infamous a plot
against

against her; and to her exclamation of surprise and pleasure, only returned a cool bow, and directly left the room. She was vexed at seeing this woman. The conduct of Colonel Belgrave had hitherto been concealed, from motives of pride and delicacy; and to Lady Greystock, of all other beings, she wished it not revealed; her only hope of its not being so was, that this woman, on her own account, would not mention it, as she must be conscious that her efforts to serve him were not undiscovered.

Mrs. Jennings had been housekeeper to Lady Greystock during her residence in England, and so successfully ingratiated herself into her esteem, that though dismissed from her service, she yet retained her favour. Lady Greystock was surprised to see she and Amanda knew each other, and enquired minutely how the acquaintance had commenced. The manner in which she mentioned Amanda, convinced Mrs. Jennings she was not high in her estimation, and from this conviction she thought she might safely assert any falsehood she pleased against her. As she knew enough of her Lady's disposition to be assured she never would contradict an assertion to the prejudice of a person she disliked, by what she designed, saying, she trusted any thing Amanda might say against her would appear malicious, and that she should also be revenged for the disdainful air with which she had regarded her.

She told her Ladyship that, near a year back, Miss Fitzalan had been a lodger of her's, as also an old

officer she called her father; but had she known what kind of people they were, she never would have admitted them into her house. Miss was followed by such a set of gallants, she really thought the reputation of her house would have been ruined; among them was a Colonel Belgrave, a sad rake, who she believed was the favourite. She was determined on making them decamp, when suddenly Miss went off, nobody knew where, but it might easily be guessed; she did not travel alone, for the Colonel disappeared at the same time.

The character of Fitzalan, and the uniform propriety of Amanda's conduct, forbade Lady Greystock's giving implicit credit to what Mrs. Jennings said; she perceived in it the exaggerations of malice and falsehood, occasioned, she supposed, by disappointed avarice, or offended pride. She resolved, however, to relate all she heard to the Marchioness, without betraying the smallest doubt of its veracity.

It may appear strange that Lady Greystock, after taking Amanda, unsolicited, under her protection, should, without any cause for enmity, seek to injure her; but Lady Greystock was a woman devoid of principle; from selfish motives she had taken Amanda, and from selfish motives she was ready to sacrifice her. Her Ladyship had enjoyed so much happiness in her matrimonial connections, that she had no objection again to enter the lists of Hymen, and Lord Cherbury was the object at which her present wishes pointed.

The

The Marchioness had hinted, in pretty plain terms, that if she counteracted Lord Mortimer's respecting Amanda, she would forward her's relative to Lord Cherbury.

She thought what Mrs. Jennings had alleged would effectually forward their plans; as she knew, if called upon, she would support it. The next morning she went to Portman-Square, to communicate her important intelligence to the Marchioness and Lady Euphrasia.

Joy and exultation sat upon their features at receiving this interesting communication, which opened so charming a prospect of separating Lord Mortimer from Amanda, by giving them the power of injuring her character. This joy and exultation they deemed requisite for some time to conceal; they considered their measures would be more successful for being gradually brought about, and therefore resolved rather to undermine than directly strike at the peace of Amanda.

Like Lady Greystock, they disbelieved Mrs. Jennings's tale; but, like her Ladyship, confined this disbelief to their own bosoms. In the manner, the appearance of Amanda, there was an innocence, a mildness, that denoted something holy dwelt within her breast, and forbade the entrance of any impure or wayward passions; besides, from a gentleman who had resided in Devonshire, they learned the distress Fitzalan was reduced to by Bolgrave's revenge for the virtue

virtue of his daughter. This gentleman was now, however, on the Continent, and they had no fear of their allegations against Amanda being contradicted, or their schemes against her being overthrown.

After some consultation, it was agreed, as a means of expediting their plot, that Lady Greystock and Amanda should immediately remove to the Marchioness's house; by this change of abode, too, Lord Mortimer would be prevented taking any material step relative to Amanda, till the period arrived when his own inclination would most probably render any further trouble on that account unnecessary.

Lady Greystock, on her return to Pall-Mall, after a warm eulogium on the friendship of the Marchioness, mentioned the invitation she had given them to her house, which she declared she could not refuse, as it was made from an ardent desire of enjoying more of their society than she had hitherto done during their short stay in London. She also told Amanda that both the Marchioness and Lady Euphrasia had expressed a tender regard for her, and a wish of proving to the world, that any coolness which existed between her families was removed, by her becoming their guest.

This projected removal was extremely disagreeable to Amanda, as it not only terminated the morning interviews which were to take place between her and Lord Mortimer, during the absence of Lady Greystock with her lawyers, but threatened to impose a restraint

restraint upon her looks, as well as actions; being confident, from the views and suspicions of Lady Euphrasia, she should continually be watched with the closest circumspection. Her part, however, was acquiescence; the lodgings were discharged, and the next morning they took up their residence under the Marquis of Rosline's roof, to the infinite surprise and mortification of Lord Mortimer, who, like Amanda, anticipated the disagreeable consequences which would result from it.

The altered manners of the Marchioness and Lady Euphrasia surprised Amanda; they received her not merely with politeness, but affection; recapitulated all Lady Greystock had already said concerning their regard; bid her consider herself entirely at home in their house, and appointed a maid solely to attend her.

Notwithstanding their former cool, even contemptuous conduct, Amanda, the child of innocence and simplicity, could not believe the alteration in their manners feigned; she rather believed that her own patience and humility had at length conciliated their regard. The idea pleased her, and, like every other which she supposed could give her father satisfaction, it was instantly communicated to him.

She found herself most agreeably mistaken relative to the restraint she had feared; she was perfect mistress of her own time and actions; and when she saw Lord Mortimer, no lowering looks, no studied interference, as heretofore, from the Marchioness or
Lady

Lady Euphrasia, prevented their frequently conversing together. The Marchioness made her several elegant presents, and Lady Euphrasia frequently dropped the formal appellation of Miss Fitzalan for the more familiar one of Amanda.

Sir Charles Bingley, agreeable to his resolution of not relinquishing Amanda without another effort for her favour, still persisted in his attentions, and visited constantly at the Marquis's.

Amanda had been about a fortnight in Portman-Square, when she went one night with the Marchioness, Lady Euphrasia, Miss Malcolm, and Lady Greystock, to the pantheon. Lord Mortimer told her that, if he could possibly leave a particular party he was engaged to, he would be there. She therefore, on that account, wished to keep herself disengaged; but immediately, on her entrance, she was joined by Sir Charles Bingley, and she found she must either dance with him, as he requested, or consent to listen to his usual conversation; and she chose the first, as being least particular. The dancing over, Sir Charles was conducting her to get some refreshment, when a gentleman hastily stepping forward, saluted him by his name. Amanda started at the sound of the voice; she raised her eyes, and, with equal horror and surprise, beheld Colonel Belgrave.

She turned pale, trembled, and involuntary exclaimed, "Gracious Heaven!" Her soul recoiled at his sight, as if an evil genius had suddenly darted into
her

her path to blast her hopes of happiness. Sickening with emotion, her head grew giddy, and she caught Sir Charles's arm to prevent her falling.

Alarmed by her paleness and agitation, he hastily demanded the cause of her disorder; willing to believe, notwithstanding what he had seen, that it did not proceed from the sight of Colonel Belgrave. "Oh take me, take me from this room!" was all, in faltering accents, Amanda could pronounce, still leaning on him for support. Colonel Belgrave enquired tenderly what he could do to serve her, and at the same time attempted to take her hand. She shrunk from his touch with a look expressive of horror, and again besought Sir Charles to take her from the room, and procure her a conveyance home. Her agitation now became contagious; it was visible to Sir Charles that it proceeded from seeing Colonel Belgrave, and he trembled as he supported her.

Belgrave offered his services in assisting to support her from the room, but she motioned with her hand to repulse him.

At the door they met Lord Mortimer entering. Terrified by the situation of Amanda, all caution, all reserve forsook him, and his rapid and impassioned enquiries betrayed the tender interest she had in his heart. Unable to answer them herself, Sir Charles replied for her, saying, "She had been taken extremely ill after dancing;" and added, "he would
resign

reign her to his Lordship's protection while he went to procure her a chair."

Lord Mortimer received the lovely trembler in his arms; he softly called her his Amanda, the beloved of his soul, and she began to revive: his presence was at once a relief and comfort to her, and his language soothed the perturbations of her mind; but as she raised her head from his shoulder, she beheld Colonel Belgrave standing near them. His invidious eyes fastened on her; she averted her head, and saying the air would do her good, Lord Mortimer led her forward, and took this opportunity of expressing his wishes for the period when he should be at liberty to watch over her with guardian care, sooth every weakness, and soften every care.

In a few minutes Sir Charles returned, and told her he had procured a chair. She thanked him with grateful sweetness for his attention, and requested Lord Mortimer to acquaint the ladies with the reason of her abrupt departure. His Lordship wished himself to have attended her to Portman-Square, but she thought it would appear too particular, and would not suffer him. She retired to her room immediately on her return, and endeavoured, though unsuccessfully, to compose her spirits.

The distress she suffered from Belgrave's conduct had left an impression on her mind which could not be erased; the terror his presence inspired was too powerful for reason to conquer, and raised the most gloomy

gloomy presages in her mind ; she believed him capable of any villany ; his looks had declared a continuance of illicit love ; she trembled at the idea of his stratagems being renewed ; her apprehensions were doubly painful, from the necessity of concealment, lest those dearer to her than existence should be involved in danger on her account. To Heaven she looked up for protection, and the terrors of her heart were somewhat lessened, conscious that Heaven could render the aims of Belgrave against her peace, as abortive as those against her innocence had been.

Sir Charles Bingley parted from Lord Mortimer immediately after Amanda's departure, and returned arm in arm with Belgrave to the room. "Belgrave," said he abruptly, after muting some minutes, "you know Miss Fitzalan?"

Belgrave answered not hastily ; he appeared as if deliberating on the reply he should give. At last, "I do know Miss Fitzalan," cried he ; "her father was my tenant in Devonshire ; she is one of the loveliest girls I ever knew."

"Lovely indeed," said Sir Charles, with a deep and involuntary sigh ; "but it is somewhat extraordinary to me that, instead of noticing you as a friend or acquaintance, she should look alarmed and agitated, as if she had seen an enemy."

"My dear Bingley," exclaimed Belgrave, "surely at this time of day you cannot be a stranger to the unaccountable caprices of the female mind?"

"'Tis

"'Tis very extraordinary to me, I own," resumed Sir Charles, "that Miss Fitzalan should behave as she did to you. Were you and her family ever very intimate?"

An invidious smile lurked on Belgrave's countenance at this question.

"Belgrave," exclaimed Sir Charles, passionately, your manner appears so mysterious, that it distracts me; if friendship will not induce you to account for it, my intentions relative to Miss Fitzalan will compel me to insist on your doing so."

"Come, come, Bingley," replied the Colonel, "this is not a country for extorting confession; however, seriously, you might depend on my honour, exclusive of my friendship, to conceal nothing from you in which you were materially interested." So saying, he snatched away his arm, rushed into the crowd, and instantly disappeared.

This assurance, however, could not calm the disquietude of Sir Charles; his soul was tortured with impatience and anxiety for an explanation of the mystery, which the agitation of Amanda, and the evasive answers of Belgrave, had betrayed. He sought the latter through the room, till convinced of his departure, and resolved the next morning to entreat him to deal candidly with him.

Agreeable to this resolution, he was preparing after breakfast for his visit, when a letter was brought him, which contained the following lines:—

"If

"If Sir Charles Bingley has the least regard for his honour or tranquillity, he will immediately relinquish his intentions relative to Miss Fitzalan: this caution comes from a sincere friend; from a person whom delicacy, not want of veracity, urges to this secret mode of giving it."

Sir Charles perused and re-perused the letter, as if doubting the evidence of his eyes; he at last flung it from him, and clasping his hands together, exclaimed, "This is indeed a horrible explanation." He took up the detested paper; again he examined the characters, and recognized the writing of Colonel Belgrave. He hastily snatched up his hat, and, with the paper in his hand, flew directly to his house. The Colonel was alone.

"Belgrave," said Sir Charles, in almost breathless agitation, "are you the author of this letter?" presenting it to him.

Belgrave took it, read it, but continued silent.

"Oh Belgrave!" exclaimed Sir Charles, in a voice trembling with agony, "pity and relieve my suspense."

"I am the author of it," replied Belgrave, with solemnity. "Miss Fitzalan and I were once tenderly attached; I trust I am no deliberate libertine; but when a lovely seducing girl was thrown purposely in my way——"

"Oh stop!" said Sir Charles, "to me any extenuation of your conduct is unnecessary; 'tis sufficient to know that Miss Fitzalan and I are for ever separated."

His emotion overpowered him ; he leaned on a table, and covered his face with an handkerchief.

"The shock I have received," said he, "almost renders me Amanda was—alas ! I must say, is dear, inexpressibly dear to my soul. I thought her the most lovely, the most estimable of women, and the anguish I now feel is more on her account than my own. I cannot bear the idea of the contempt which may fall upon her. Oh Belgrave ! 'tis melancholy to behold a human being, so endowed by nature as she is, insensible or unworthy of her blessings. Amanda," he continued, after a pause, "never encouraged me ; I therefore cannot accuse her of intending deceit."

"She never encouraged you," replied Belgrave, "because she was ambitious of a higher title. Amanda, beneath a specious appearance of innocence, conceals a light disposition, and a designing heart ; she aspires to Mortimer's hand, and may probably succeed, for his language and attentions to her last night were those of a tender lover."

"I shall return immediately to Ireland," said Sir Charles, "and endeavour to forget I have ever seen her : she has made me indeed experience all the fervency of love, and bitterness of disappointment ; what I felt for her I think I shall never again feel for any woman.

—I'll lock up all the gates of love,
And on my eye-lids shall conjecture hang,
To turn all beauty into thoughts of harm,
And never more shall it be gracious.

Sir

Sir Charles Bingley and Colonel Belgrave, in early life, had contracted a friendship for each other, which time had strengthened in one, but reduced to a mere shadow in the other. On meeting the Colonel unexpectedly in town, Sir Charles had informed him of his intentions relative to Amanda. His heart throbbed at the mention of her name; he had long endeavoured to discover her; pride, love, and revenge, were all concerned in the accomplishment of his designs, which disappointment had only stimulated. He was one of those determined characters which never relinquish a purpose, "though heaven and earth that purpose crossed." The confidence Sir Charles reposed in him, joined to his warm and unsuspicious temper, convinced him he would be credulous enough to believe any imputation he should cast on Amanda; he therefore lost no time in contriving this execrable scheme, without the smallest compulsion for destroying the reputation of an innocent girl, or injuring the happiness of an amiable man.

Removed from the protection of her father, he believed his destined victim could not escape the snare he should spread for her; and as a means of expediting his success, under the appearance of feeling, urged Sir Charles's return to Ireland.

The easy credit which Sir Charles gave to the vile allegations of Belgrave cannot be wondered at, when his long intimacy, and total ignorance of his real character, is considered. He knew Belgrave to be a gay

His emotion overpowered him, and he would have supposed any man to be a hardened and covered his face with his hand, audacious, or sufficiently

“The shock I have experienced by your assertion as Belgrave had expressed me. Aman without truth for its support.

dear, inexpressibly dear friend, though the source of the most lovely, and the anguish I now feel for him, were more pitied than my own. I rather believed they proceeded from which may be the result of passion than the deliberation of choly to be, and that they were long since sincerely re-

as she is, and that they were long since sincerely re-
Aman could not be forgotten; the hold she had
cou. his heart could not easily be shaken off; and, like

in the recording angel, he was often tempted to drop a
tear over her faults, and obliterate them for ever from
his memory; this, however, was considered the
mere suggestion of weakness, and he ordered imme-
diate preparations to be made for his return to
Ireland.

CHAP. XI.

Oh how this tyrant, Doubt, torments my breast !
My thoughts, like birds, who frightened from their rest,
Around the place, where all was hush'd before,
Flutter, and hardly settle any more.

OTWAY.

LORD MORTIMER, distressed by the indisposition of Amanda, hastened at an earlier hour than usual for his morning visits to Portman-Square, and was ushered into Lady Euphrasia's dressing-room, where she and Miss Malcolm, who had continued with her the preceding night, were sitting *tête-à-tête* at breakfast. His Lordship was a welcome visitor, but it was soon obvious on whose account he had made his appearance; for scarcely were the usual compliments over, ere he enquired about Miss Fitzalan.

Lady Euphrasia said she was still unwell, and had not yet left her apartment.

"She has not recovered her surprise of last night," exclaimed Miss Malcolm, with a malicious smile.

"What surprise?" asked his Lordship.

“Dear me,” replied Miss Malcolm, “was not your Lordship present at the time she met Colonel Belgrave?”

“No,” said Lord Mortimer, changing colour, “I was not present. But what has Colonel Belgrave to say to Miss Fitzalan?” asked he, in an agitated voice.

“That is a question your Lordship must put to the young Lady herself,” answered Miss Malcolm.

“Now I declare,” cried Lady Euphrasia, addressing her friend, “’tis very probable her illness did not proceed from seeing Colonel Belgrave; you know she never mentioned being acquainted with him, though her father was his tenant in Devonshire.”

Lord Mortimer grew more disturbed, and rose abruptly.

Lady Euphrasia mentioned their intention of going that evening to the play, and invited him to be of the party; he accepted her invitation, and retired.

His visible distress was a source of infinite mirth to the young ladies, which they indulged the moment he quitted the room. The circumstance relative to Belgrave the Marchioness had informed them of, as she and Lady Greystock were near Amanda when she met him.

Lord Mortimer was unhappy; the mind which has once harboured suspicion will, from the most trivial circumstance, be tempted again to give admission to the unpleasing guest; nor was it a trivial circumstance

stance which discomposed the too susceptible heart of Mortimer. The sudden illness of Amanda, her extraordinary agitation, her eagerness to quit the room, the close though silent attendance of Belgrave; all these, I say, when recalled to recollection, gave an air of probability to Miss Malcolm's insinuation that her disorder was occasioned by seeing him. From residing more constantly in England than Sir Charles Bingley had done, he had more opportunities of learning Belgrave's real character, which he knew to be that of a professed libertine; it was strange, he thought, that when Amanda informed him she once resided in Devonshire, she should conceal her father being the Colonel's tenant; he began to think her reluctance to a clandestine and immediate marriage might have proceeded from some secret attachment, and not from the strict adherence to filial duty, which had exalted her so much in his opinion.

Yet the idea was scarcely formed, ere he endeavoured to suppress it; he started, as if from an uneasy dream, and wondered how he could have conceived this, or any other idea, injurious to Amanda; he felt a degree of remorse at having allowed her for a moment to be lessened in his opinion. Her tenderness, her purity, he said to himself, could not be feigned; no, she was a treasure greater than he deserved to possess; nor would he, like a wayward son of error, fling away the happiness he had so long desired to obtain.

The calm this resolution produced was but transient; doubts had been raised, and doubts could not be banished; he was inclined to think them unjust, yet had not power to dispel them. Vainly he applied to the ideas which had heretofore been such consolatory resources of comfort to him; namely, that his father would consent to his union with Amanda, through the interference of his aunt, and the felicity he should enjoy in that union; an unusual heaviness clung to his heart, which, like a gloomy sky, cast a shade of sadness over every prospect. Thoughtful and pensive he reached home just as Sir Charles Bingley was entering the door, who informed him he had just received a note from Lord Cherbury, desiring his immediate presence.

Lord Mortimer attended him to the Earl, who acquainted him that he had received a letter from Mr. Fitzalan, in which he expressed a warm sense of the honour Sir Charles did his family by addressing Miss Fitzalan; and that to have her united to a character so truly estimable, would give him the truest happiness, from the conviction that her's would be secured by such an union. "He has written to his daughter, expressing his sentiments," continued Lord Cherbury; "I have therefore no doubt, Sir Charles, but what every thing will succeed as you wish."

"I am sorry, my Lord," cried Sir Charles, with an agitated voice, and a cheek flushed with emotion, "that I ever troubled your Lordship in this affair; as

I have

I have now, and for ever, relinquished all ideas of an union with Miss Fitzalan."

"The resolution is really somewhat extraordinary and sudden," replied the Earl, "after the conversation which so lately passed between us."

"Adopted, however, my Lord, from a thorough conviction that happiness could never be attained in an union with that young lady."—Sir Charles's tenderness for Amanda was still undiminished; he wished to preserve her from censure, and thus proceeded:—

"Your Lordship must allow I could have little chance of happiness in allying myself to a woman who has resolutely and uniformly treated me with indifference. Passion blinded my reason when I addressed your Lordship relative to Miss Fitzalan; but its mists are now dispersed, and sober reflection obliges me to relinquish a scheme, whose accomplishment could not possibly give me satisfaction."

"You are certainly the best judge of your own actions, Sir Charles," replied the Earl; "my acting in the affair proceeded from a wish to serve you, as well as from my friendship for Captain Fitzalan. I must suppose your conduct will never disparage your own honour, or cast a slight upon Miss Fitzalan."

"That, my Lord, you may be assured of," said Sir Charles, with some warmth; "my actions and their motives have hitherto, and will ever, I trust,

bear the strictest investigation. I cannot retire without thanking your Lordship for the interest you took in my favour; had things succeeded as I then hoped and expected, I cannot deny but I should have been much happier than I am at present." He then bowed and retired.

Lord Mortimer had listened with astonishment to Sir Charles's relinquishment of Amanda; like his father, he thought it a sudden and extraordinary resolution: he was before jealous of Amanda's love; he was now jealous of her honour. The agitation of Sir Charles seemed to imply even a cause more powerful than her coldness for resigning her; he recollected that the Baronet and the Colonel were intimate friends. Distracted by apprehensions, he rushed out of the house, and overtook Sir Charles ere he had quitted the square.

"Why, Bingley," cried he, with affected gaiety, "I thought you too valiant a knight to be easily overcome by despair; and that without first trying every effort to win her favour, you never would give up a fair lady you had set your heart on."

"I leave such efforts for your Lordship," replied Sir Charles, "or those who have equal patience."

"But seriously, Bingley, I think this sudden resignation of Miss Fitzalan somewhat strange; why last night I could have sworn you were as much attached to her as ever. From Lord Cherbury's friendship for Captain Fitzalan, I think her, in some degree,
under

under his protection and mine; and as the particularity of your attentions attracted observation, I think your abruptly withdrawing them requires explanation."

"As Lord Cherbury was the person I applied to relative to Miss Fitzalan," exclaimed Sir Charles, "and as he was satisfied with the motive I assigned for my conduct, be assured, my Lord, I shall never give another to you."

"Your words," retorted Lord Mortimer, with warmth, "imply that there was another motive for your conduct than the one you avowed: what horrid inference might not be drawn from such an intimation! Oh, Sir Charles! reputation is a fragile flower, which the slightest breath may injure."

"My Lord, if Miss Fitzalan's reputation is never injured but by my means, it will ever continue unfilled."

"I cannot, indeed," resumed Lord Mortimer, style myself her guardian, but I consider myself her friend; and from the feelings of friendship, shall ever evince my interest in her welfare, and resent any conduct which can possibly render her an object of censure to any being."

"Allow me to ask your Lordship one question," cried Sir Charles, "and promise, on your honour, to answer it."

"I do promise," said Lord Mortimer.

"Then, my Lord, did you ever really wish I should succeed with Miss Fitzalan?"

Lord Mortimer coloured. "You expect, Sir Charles, I shall answer you on my honour.—Then really I never did."

"Your passions and mine," continued Sir Charles, "are impetuous; we had better check them in time lest they lead us to lengths we may hereafter repent of.—Of Miss Fitzalan's fame, be assured, no man can be more tenacious than I should: I love her with the truest ardour. Her acceptance of my proposals would have given me felicity; my suddenly withdrawing them can never injure her, when I declare my motive for so doing was her indifference. Lord Cherbury is satisfied with the reason I have assigned for resigning her; he is conscious that no man of sensibility could experience happiness with a woman in whose heart he knew he had no interest: this, I suppose, your Lordship will also allow."

"Certainly," replied Lord Mortimer.

"Then it strikes me, my Lord, that it is your conduct, not mine, which has a tendency to injure Miss Fitzalan; that it is your words, not mine, which convey an insinuation against her; you really appear as if conscious some other cause existed, which would have made me relinquish her, without the one I have already assigned for doing so."

Lord Mortimer was instantly convinced of the justice of what Sir Charles said: he began to fear his warmth would really prove prejudicial to Amanda; betray the doubts which had obtruded on his mind, and communicate them to those who might not be equally

equally influenced by tenderness and delicacy to conceal them.

"You are right, Sir Charles," said he, "in what you have said: passion, like a bad advocate, hurts the cause in which it is engaged. From my knowledge of your character, I should have been convinced your honour would have prevented any improper conduct. You are going to Ireland; permit me, Sir Charles, to offer you my best wishes for your future happiness."

Sir Charles took Lord Mortimer's extended hand; he respected and esteemed his Lordship, and a mutual interchange of good wishes took place between them, as this was the last interview they expected for a long time.

The indisposition of Amanda was more of the mental than the bodily kind; and on the first intimation of a party to the play, she agreed to join it, in hopes the amusement would remove her dejection. Her father's letter, relative to Sir Charles Bingley, had given her some uneasiness; but as he left her free to act, she contented herself with using the negative he allowed her, by a solemn resolution of never acting contrary to his inclinations, and answered his letter to this purpose.

Lord Mortimer and Freeloze attended the ladies in the evening to the play. His Lordship found an opportunity of tenderly enquiring after Amanda's health. When they were seated in the house, he perceived a lady in another box, to whom he wished

to

to speak, and accordingly left his party. This lady offered him a seat by herself, which he accepted: she was a stranger to Amanda, young, and extremely beautiful. Amanda, however, had none of that foolish weakness which could make her dread a rival in every new face, or feel uneasiness at Lord Mortimer's attention to any woman but herself; assured that his affections for her were founded on the basis of esteem, and that she should retain them while worthy of esteem, she could, without being discomposed by the agreeable conversation he appeared enjoying, fix her attention on the stage; so entirely, indeed, that she observed not, from time to time, the glances Lord Mortimer directed towards her. Not so his fair companion; she noticed the wanderings of his eyes, and her own involuntarily pursued their course. She was speaking at the moment, but suddenly stopped, and Lord Mortimer saw her change colour. He turned pale himself, and, in a faltering voice, asked her, "if she knew the lady she had been long looking at?"

"Know her," replied she, "Oh Heavens! but too well."

Lord Mortimer trembled universally, and was compelled to have recourse to his handkerchief to hide his emotion.

It was by Adela, the lovely and neglected wife of Belgrave, he was sitting; she had been a short time in London, and her acquaintance with Lord Mortimer commenced

commenced at a ball, where she had danced with him. He was not one of those kind of men, who, when in love, had neither eyes nor ears but for the object of that love; he could see perfections in other women besides his Amanda, and was particularly pleased with Mrs. Belgrave. He instantly perceived she knew Amanda, also that that knowledge was attended with pain. The well-known profligacy of her husband intruded on his memory, and he shuddered at the dreadful thoughts which rose in his mind.

Curiosity had directed the eyes of Adela to Amanda, but admiration, and an idea of having somewhere before seen her face, rivetted them upon her; at last, the picture Oscar Fitzalan had shewn occurred to her recollection, and she was immediately convinced it was no other than the original of that picture she now saw. Shocked at the sight of a person, who, as she thought, had stepped, though innocently, between her and felicity; and distressed by the emotions which past scenes thus recalled gave rise to, she entreated Lord Mortimer to conduct her from the box, that she might return home.

He complied with her request, but stopped in the lobby, and entreated her to tell him where she had known the lady she had so attentively regarded. Adela blushed, and would, if possible, have evaded the question; but the earnestness of his Lordship's manner compelled her to answer it. She said she had

no

no personal knowledge of the lady, but recollected her face, from having seen her picture with a gentleman.

"And who was the gentleman?" asked Lord Mortimer, with a forced smile, and a faltering voice.

"That," replied Adela, with involuntary quickness, "I will not tell."

"I should apologize, indeed," cried Lord Mortimer, recollecting himself, "for a curiosity which may appear impertinent." He led her to a chair, and deliberated whether he should not follow her example in quitting the house.

Miss Malcolm had first made him uneasy: uneasiness introduced doubts which Sir Charles Bingley had increased, and Mrs. Belgrave almost confirmed. He dreaded a horrid confirmation of his fears; the picture, like Othello's handkerchief, was a source of unspeakable anguish. The agitation that Mrs. Belgrave had betrayed, on mentioning it, joined to her concealment of the gentleman she had seen it with, tempted him to believe he was no other than her husband.

Yet that he might not be accused of yielding rashly to jealousy, he resolved to confine his suspicions, like his pangs, to his own bosom, except assured they were well founded; a little time, he supposed, would determine the opinion he should form of Amanda. If he found she encouraged Belgrave, he resolved to leave her without an explanation; if, on the contrary,

trary, he saw that she avoided him, he meant to mention the circumstance of the picture to her, yet so as not to hurt her feelings, and be regulated by her answer relative to his future conduct. He returned at last to the box, and procured a seat behind her. He had not occupied it long, ere Colonel Belgrave (who, from a retired part of the house, where he sat with some female friends, had observed Amanda) entered the next box, and made his way to the pillar against which she leaned. He endeavoured to catch her eyes; but the noise he made on entering put her on her guard, and she instantly averted her face. Her embarrassment was visible to her party, and they all, Lord Mortimer excepted, enjoyed it. Scarcely could he refrain from chastising the audacity of Belgrave's looks, who continued to gaze on Amanda, though he could not see her face; nothing but the discovery which such a step would produce could have prevented his Lordship, in his present irritable state of mind, from chastising what he deemed the height of insolence.

At last the hour came for relieving Amanda from a situation extremely painful to her. As Lord Mortimer sat next the Marchioness, he was compelled to offer her his hand. Freelove led Euphrasia; Lady Greystock and Miss Malcolm followed her; and Amanda was the last who quitted the box. A crowd in the lobby impeded their progress. Amanda was close behind the Marchioness, when Belgrave forced

forced his way to her, and attempted to take her hand at the very moment Lord Mortimer turned to look at her, who heard him say, "Dear, though unkind Amanda, why this cruel change in your conduct?"

The eyes of Lord Mortimer flashed fire. "Miss Fitzalan," said he, in a voice trembling through passion, "if you'll accept my arm, I will make way for you, or at least secure you from impertinence."—Amanda, though trembling and confounded by his looks, hesitated not to accept his offer. Belgrave knew his words alluded to him; at present, however, he resolved not to resent them, convinced, that if he did, his views on Amanda would be defeated. From that moment her beauty was not more powerful in stimulating his designs, than his desire of revenge on Lord Mortimer; he saw he was fondly attached to Amanda, and he believed his proud heart would feel no event so afflictive as that which should deprive him of her.

Lord Mortimer handed Amanda in silence to the carriage; he was pressed to return to supper, but refused. The ladies found the Marquis and Lord Cherbury together. Amanda retired to her chamber immediately after supper; the presence of Belgrave had increased the dejection which she hoped the amusements of the theatre would have dissipated. She now indeed longed for the period when she should be entitled to the protection of Lord Mortimer; when she should no longer dread the audacity or stratagems
of

of Belgrave. Lord Cherbury, on her retiring, expressed his regret at her coldness to Sir Charles Eingley, by which she had lost a most honourable and advantageous attachment.

This was an opportunity not to be neglected by the Marchioness for commencing her operations against Fitzalan. A glance to Lady Greystock was the signal to begin.

"To those," said Lady Greystock, "who are ignorant of Miss Fitzalan's real motives for refusing Sir Charles, it must appear, no doubt, extraordinary; but ambitious people are not easily satisfied: indeed I cannot blame her so much for entertaining aspiring notions as those who instilled them into her mind."

Lord Cherbury stared, and requested an explanation of her words.

"Why I declare, my Lord," cried she, "I do not know but that it will be more friendly to explain than conceal my meaning; when once informed of the young lady's views, your Lordship may be able to convince her of that fallacy, and prevail on her not to lose another good opportunity of settling herself in consequence of them; in short, my Lord, Miss Fitzalan, prompted by her father, has cast her eyes on Lord Mortimer; presuming on your friendship, he thought an union between them might easily be accomplished. I do not believe Lord Mortimer at first gave any encouragement to their designs; but when the girl was continually thrown in
his

his way, it was impossible not to notice her at last. I really expressed a thorough disapprobation to her coming to London, knowing their motives for desiring the excursion ; but her father never ceased persecuting me till I consented to take her under my protection."

"Upon my word," cried the Marquis, who was not of the ladies' privy-council, though if he had, it is probable he would not have objected to their schemes, "Captain Fitzalan must have had some such motive as this Lady Greystock has mentioned for sending his daughter to London, or else he would not have been so ridiculous as to put himself at the expence of fitting her out for company she has no right to enter."

"I never thought," exclaimed Lord Cherbury, whose mind was irritated to the most violent degree of resentment against his injured friend, "that Captain Fitzalan could have acted with such duplicity. He knew the views I entertained for my son, and there is a mean treachery in his attempting to counteract them."

"Nay, my Lord," said Lady Greystock, "you are a father yourself, and must make allowances for the anxiety of a parent to establish a child."

"No, Madam," he replied, "I can make no allowance for a deviation from integrity, or for a sacrifice of honour and gratitude at the shrine of interest. The subject has discomposed me, and I must beg to be excused for abruptly retiring : nothing, indeed, I believe

believe, can wound one so severely as deceit, where one reposed implicit confidence."

The ladies were enraptured at the success of their scheme. The passion of Lord Cherbury could scarcely be smothered in their presence; on the head of Fitzalan they knew it would burst with full violence. They did not mention Belgrave; relative to him they resolved to affect profound ignorance.

The passions of Lord Cherbury were impetuous. He had, as I have already hinted, secret motives for desiring a connexion between his family and the Marquis's; and the idea of that desire being defeated, drove him almost to distraction. He knew his son's passions, though not so easily irritated as his own, were, when once irritated, equally violent. To remonstrate with him concerning Miss Fitzalan, he believed, would be unavailing; he therefore resolved, if possible, to have her removed out of his way ere he apprised him of the discovery he had made of his attachment. He entertained not a doubt of Lady Greystock's veracity; from his general knowledge of mankind, he believed self the predominant consideration in every breast. His feelings were too violent not to seek an immediate vent; and ere he went to-bed, he wrote a bitter and reproachful letter to Fitzalan, which concluded with an entreaty, or rather a command, to send, without delay, for his daughter. A dreadful stroke this for poor Fitzalan,

After all his wanderings round this world of care,
And all his griefs, -

He

He hoped he had at last found a spot, where his latter days might close in tranquillity.

The innocent Amanda was received the next morning with smiles by those who were preparing a plot for her destruction.

Whilst at breakfast, a servant informed Lady Greystock a young woman wanted to speak to her.

"Who is she?" asked her Ladyship; "did she not send up her name?"

"No, my Lady; but she said she had particular business with your Ladyship."

The Marchioness directed she might be shewn up, and a girl about seventeen was accordingly ushered into the room. Her figure was delicate, and her face interesting, not only from its innocence, but the strong expression of melancholy diffused over it. She appeared trembling with confusion and timidity, and the poverty of her apparel implied the source of her dejection.

"So, child," said Lady Greystock, after surveying her from head to foot, "I am told you have business with me."

"Yes, Madam;" replied she, in an accent so low as scarcely to be heard, "my father, Captain Rushbrook, desired me to deliver a letter to your Ladyship."

She presented it, and endeavoured to screen herself from the scrutinizing and contemptuous glances of Lady Euphrasia, by pulling her hat more over her face.

"I wonder

"I wonder, child," said Lady Greystock, as she opened the letter, "what your father can write to me about? I don't suppose it can be about the affair he mentioned the other day? Why really," continued she, after she had perused it, "I believe he takes me for a fool: I am astonished, after his insolent conduct, how he can possibly have the assurance to make application to me for relief;—no, no, child, he neglected the opportunity he had of securing me his friend; it would really be a sin to give him the power of bringing up his family in idleness; no, no, child, he must learn you, and the other little dainty Misses he has, to do something for yourselves."

The poor girl blushed; a tear trembled in her eye; she tried to suppress it, but it forced its way, and dropped into her bosom. Amanda, inexpressibly shocked, could support the scene no longer; she retired precipitately, and descended to the parlour; sympathy, as well as compassion, made her feel for this daughter of affliction, for she herself knew what it was to feel the insolence of prosperity, the proud man's scorn, and all those ills which patient merit of the unworthy takes.

In a few minutes Miss Rushbrook quitted the drawing-room, and stopped in the hall to wipe away her tears. Amanda had been waiting for her, and now appeared; she started, and was hurrying away, when Amanda caught her hand, and leading her softly into the parlour, endeavoured, with angelic
3 sweetnels,

sweetness, to calm her emotion. Surprised at this unexpected attention, and overcome by her feelings, the poor girl sunk on her chair, and dropping her head on Amanda's bosom, wet it with a shower of tears, as she exclaimed, "Alas! my unfortunate parents, how can I return to behold your misery?—the grave is the only refuge for you and your wretched children."

"You must not encourage such desponding thoughts," said Amanda. "Providence, all bounteous, and all powerful, is able, in a short time, to change the gloomiest scene into one of brightness. Tell me," she continued, after a pause, "where do you reside?"

"At Kensington."

"Kensington!" repeated Amanda, "surely, in your present situation, you are unable to take such a walk."

"I must attempt it, however," replied Miss Rushbrook.

Amanda walked from her to the window, revolving a scheme which had just darted into her mind.—"If you knew any house," said she, "where you could stay for a short time, I would call on you in a carriage, and leave you at home."

This offer was truly pleasing to the poor weak trembling girl, but she modestly declined it, from the fear of giving trouble. Amanda besought her not to waste time in such unnecessary scruples, but to give her the desired information.

She

She accordingly informed her there was a haberdasher's in Bond-street, mentioning the name, where she could stay till called for.

This point settled, Amanda, fearful of being surprised, conducted her softly to the hall door, and immediately returned to the drawing-room, where she found Lady Euphrasia just beginning Rushbrook's letter for her mother's amusement.

Its stile evidently denoted the painful conflicts there were between pride and distress, ere the former could be sufficiently subdued to allow an application for relief to the person who occasioned the latter. The sight of a tender and beloved wife, languishing in the arms of sickness, and surrounded by a family, under the pressure of the severest want, had forced him to a step, which, on his own account, no necessity could have compelled him to take. He and his family, he said, had drank of the cup of misery to the very dregs; he waved the claims of justice, he only asserted those of humanity in his present application to her Ladyship; and these, he flattered himself, she would allow. He had sent a young petitioner in his behalf, whose tearful eye, whose faded cheek, were sad evidences of the misery he described.

The Marchioness declared she was astonished at his insolence in making such an application, and Lady Euphrasia protested the letter was the most ridiculous stuff she had ever read.

Amanda in this, as well as in many other instances, differed from her Ladyship; but her opinion, like a little project she had in view about the Rushbrooks, was carefully concealed.

Out of the allowance her father made her for clothes, and other expences, about ten guineas remained; which she had intended laying out in the purchase of some ornaments for her appearance at a ball, to be given in the course of the ensuing week by the Duchefs of B—, and for which, at the time of invitation, Lord Mortimer had engaged her for his partner. To give up going to this ball, to consecrate to charity the money devoted to vanity, was her project; and most fortunate did she deem the application of Rushbrook, ere her purchase was made, and she consequently prevented from giving her mite. Her soul revolted from the inhumanity of the Marchioness, her daughter, and Lady Greystock; exempt from the calamities of want themselves, they forgot the pity due to those calamities in others. "If this coldness, this obduracy," she cried within herself, "is the effect of prosperity; if thus it closes the avenues of benevolence and compassion, oh! never may the dangerous visiter approach me, for ill should I think the glow of compassion and sensibility exchanged for all its gaudy pleasures."

The ladies had mentioned their intention of going to an auction, where, to use Lady Euphrasia's phrase, "they expected to see all the world." Amanda ex-
cused

cused herself from being of the party, saying she wanted to make some purchases in the city. Her excuse was readily admitted; and when they retired to their respective toilets, she sent for a coach, and being prepared against it came, immediately stepped into it, and was driven to Bond-street, where she found Miss Rushbrook, with trembling anxiety, waiting her arrival.

On their way to Kensington, the tenderness of Amanda at once conciliated the affection, and gained the entire confidence of her young companion. She related the little history of her parents' sorrows. Her father, on returning from America, with his wife and six children, had been advised by Mr. Heathfield, the friend who had effected a reconciliation between him and his uncle, to commence a suit against Lady Greystock, on the presumption that the will, by which she enjoyed Sir Geoffry's fortune, was illegally executed. He offered him his purse to carry on the suit, and his house for an habitation. Rushbrook gratefully and gladly accepted both offers; and having disposed of his commission to discharge some present demands against him, he and his family took up their residence under Mr. Heathfield's hospitable roof. In the midst of the felicity enjoyed beneath it, in the midst of the hopes their own sanguine tempers, and the flattering suggestions of the lawyers had excited, a violent fever carried off their benevolent friend ere a will was executed, in which he had promised largely

to consider Rushbrook. His heir, narrow and illiberal, had long feared that his interest would be hurt by the affection he entertained for Rushbrook; and, as if in revenge for the pain this fear had given, the moment he had the power he shewed his malignant disposition, sold all the furniture of the house at Kensington, and as a great favour, told Rushbrook he might continue in it till the expiration of the half year, when it was to be given up to the landlord. The lawyers understanding the state of his finances, soon informed him he could no longer expect their assistance. Thus, almost in one moment, did all his pleasing prospects vanish, and,

“Like the baseless fabric of a vision, left not a wreck behind.”

As a duty he owed his family, he tried whether Lady Greystock would make a compromise between justice and avarice, and afford him some means of support. Her insolence and inhumanity shocked him to the soul; and as he left her presence, he resolved never to enter it again, or apply to her. This last resolution, however, only continued till the distresses of the family grew so great as to threaten their existence, particularly that of his wife, who, overpowered by grief, had sunk into a languishing illness, which every day increased for want of proper assistance.

In hopes of procuring her some, he was tempted again to apply to Lady Greystock. The youth and innocence of his daughter would, he thought, if any thing

thing could do it, soften her flinty heart; besides, he believed that pleasure, at finding his pretensions to the fortune entirely withdrawn, would influence her to administer from it to his wants.

"We have," said Miss Rushbrook, as she concluded her simple narration, "tried and been disappointed in our last resource; what will become of us I know not; we have long been strangers to the comforts, but even the necessities of life we cannot now procure."

"Comfort," cried Amanda, "often arrives when least expected; to despair is to doubt the goodness of a Being, who has promised to protect all his creatures."

The carriage had now reached Kensington, and within a few yards of Rushbrook's habitation. Amanda stopped it; she took Miss Rushbrook's hand, and as she slipped a ten-pound note into it, exclaimed, "I trust the period is not far distant, when the friendship we have conceived for each other may be cultivated under more fortunate auspices."

Miss Rushbrook opened the folded paper; she started, and "the hectic of a moment flushed her cheek."—"Oh, Madam!" she cried, "your goodness—." Tears impeded her further utterance.

"Do not distress me," said Amanda, again taking her hand, "by mentioning such a trifle; was my ability equal to my inclination, I should blush to offer it to your acceptance; as it is, consider it but as the

foretaste of the bounty which Heaven has, I doubt not, in store for you."

She then desired the door to be opened, and told her companion she would no longer detain her. Miss Rushbrook affectionately kissed her hand, and exclaimed, "You look like an angel, and your goodness is correspondent to your looks. I will not, Madam, refuse your bounty; I accept it with gratitude for those dearer to me than myself; but ah! may I not indulge a hope of seeing you again? You are so kind, so gentle, Madam, that every care is lulled into forgetfulness whilst conversing with you."

"I shall certainly see you again as soon as possible," replied Amanda.

Miss Rushbrook then quitted the carriage, which Amanda ordered back to town, and bid the coachman drive as fast as possible. They had not proceeded far, when the traces suddenly gave way, and the man was obliged to dismount, and procure assistance from a public-house on the road in repairing them. This occasioned a delay, which greatly distressed Amanda; she wished to get home before the ladies, least, if this was not the case, her long absence should make Lady Greystock, who was remarkably inquisitive, enquire the reason of it; and to tell her she had a strong objection, convinced, as she was, that her Ladyship's knowing she relieved objects so extremely disagreeable to her, would occasion a quarrel between them, which would either render a
longer

impossible, or highly dis-
honour at the present crisis,
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human remounted his box, and
which he drove, flattered her with
reaching home as soon as she wished.
ed by this hope, she again indulged her
fancy with ideas of the comfort her little bounty
probably given Ruthbrook and his dejected
family; so sweet to her soul was the secret approba-
tion which crowned her charity; so preferable to
any pleasure she could have experienced at a ball,
that even the disappointment she believed Lord
Mortimer would feel from her declining it, was over-
looked in the satisfaction she felt from the action she
had performed. She was convinced he would en-
quire her reason for not going, which she determined
at present to conceal; it would appear like ostenta-
tion, she thought, to say that the money requisite for
her appearance at the ball was expended in charity,
and perhaps excite his generosity in a manner which
delicacy at present forbade her allowing.

She asked the footman, who handed her from the
carriage, whether the ladies were returned; and on
being answered in the affirmative, enquired the hour,
and learned it was just dinner-time. Flurried by this
intelligence, she hastened to her chamber, followed by

the maid appointed to attend her, who said Lady Greystock had enquired for her as soon as she came home. Amanda dressed herself with unusual expedition, and repaired to the drawing-room, where, in addition to the family party, she found Lord Mortimer, Freelove, Miss Malcolm, and some other ladies and gentlemen assembled.

"Bless me, child," said Lady Greystock, the moment she entered the room, "where have you been the whole day?"

"I declare, Miss Fitzalan," exclaimed Lady Euphrasia, "I believe you stole a march somewhere upon us this morning."

"Well," cried Miss Malcolm, laughing, "your Ladyship must know that people generally have some important reason for stolen marches, which they do not choose to divulge."

Amanda treated this malicious insinuation with the silent contempt it merited; and on Lady Greystock's again asking her where she had been, said, in a low hesitating voice, "In the city."

"In the city!" repeated Lord Mortimer.

This sudden exclamation startled her; she looked at him, and perceived him regarding her with the most scrutinizing earnestness. She blushed deeply, as if detected in a falsehood, and immediately bent her eyes to the ground.

The conversation now changed, but it was some time ere Amanda's confusion subsided.

Lord

Lord Mortimer, indeed, had a reason for his exclamation the little thought of. He had met the Marchioness and her companions, by appointment, at the auction, but soon grew weary of his situation, which the presence of Amanda could alone have rendered tolerable. He pleaded business as an excuse for withdrawing, and hurrying home, ordered his phaeton, and proceeded towards Kensington. As he passed the coach in which Amanda sat, at the time the traces were mending, he carelessly looked into it, and directly recognized her. Lady Euphrasia had informed him she excused herself from their party on account of some business in the city. He never heard of her having any acquaintance in or about Kensington, and was at once alarmed and surprised by discovering her. He drove to some distance from the carriage; and as soon as it began to move, pursued it with equal velocity till it reached town; and then giving his phaeton in charge to the servant, followed it on foot, till he saw Amanda alight from it at the Marquis of Rosline's. Amanda had escaped seeing his Lordship, by a profound meditation in which she was engaged at the moment, as she pensively leaned against the side of the coach. Lord Mortimer walked back with increased disorder to meet his phaeton. As he approached it, he saw Colonel Belgrave by it, on horseback, admiring the horses, which were remarkably fine, and asking to whom they belonged. His acquaintance with the Colonel had hitherto never ex-

ceeded more than a passing bow. Now prompted by an irresistible impulse, he saluted him familiarly; enquired whether he had had a pleasant ride that morning, and how far he had been."

"No farther than Kensington," replied the Colonel.

This answer was confirmation strong to all the fears of Lord Mortimer; he turned pale, dropped the reins which he had taken, with an intention of remounting, and, without even noticing the Colonel, flew from the place, and arrived at home almost in a state of distraction. He was engaged to dine at the Marquis's, but, in the first violence of his feelings, resolved on sending an apology. Ere the servant, however, summoned for that purpose, had entered his apartment, he changed his resolution. "I will go," said he, "though appearances are against her; she may, perhaps, (and he tried to derive some comfort from the idea) be able satisfactorily to account for her being at Kensington."

Tortured by conflicting passions, alternately hoping and doubting, he arrived in Portman-Square.

Lady Greystock and Lady Euphrasia dwelt with wonder on the length of Amanda's morning excursion. When she entered the room, he thought she appeared embarrassed; and that on Lady Greystock's addressing her, this embarrassment increased; but when she said she had been in the city, her duplicity, as he termed it, appeared so monstrous to him, that
he

he could not forbear an involuntary repetition of her words; so great, indeed, was the indignation it excited in his breast, that he could scarcely forbear reproaching her as the destroyer of his and her own felicity. Her blush appeared to him not the ingenuous colour of innocence, but the glow of shame and guilt. It was evident to him that she had seen Belgrave that morning; that he was the occasion of all the mystery which had appeared in her conduct, and that it was the knowledge of the improper influence he had over the heart which made Sir Charles Bingley so suddenly resign her.

“Gracious Heaven!” said he to himself, “who, that looked upon Amanda, could ever suppose duplicity harboured in her breast; yet that too surely it is, I have every reason to suppose: yet a little longer I will bear a torturing state of suspense, nor reveal my doubts, till thoroughly convinced they are well founded.

He sat opposite to her at dinner, and his eyes were directed towards her with that tender sadness which we feel on viewing a beloved object we know ourselves on the point of losing for ever.

His melancholy was quickly perceived by the penetrating Marchioness and Lady Euphrasia; they saw, with delight, that the poison of suspicion infused into his mind was already beginning to operate; they anticipated the success of all their schemes; their spirits grew uncommonly elevated; and Lady

Euphrasia determined, whenever she had the power, to revenge on the susceptible nature of Mortimer all the uneasiness he had made her suffer, and to add, as far as malice could add to it, to the misery about to be the lot of Amanda.

The dejection of Lord Mortimer was also observed by Amanda; it excited her fears, and affected her sensibility; she dreaded that his aunt had refused complying with his request relative to her interference with his father, or that the Earl had been urging him to an immediate union with Lady Euphrasia. Perhaps he now wavered between love and duty; the thought struck a cold damp upon her heart. "Yet no," cried she, "it cannot be; if inclined to change, Lord Mortimer would at once have informed me."

In the evening there was a large addition to the party, but Lord Mortimer sat pensively apart from the company. Amanda, by chance, procured a seat next his. His paleness alarmed her, and she could not forbear hinting her fears that he was ill.

"I am ill indeed," sighed he, heavily. He looked at her as he spoke, and beheld her regarding him with the most exquisite tenderness; but the period was past for receiving delight from such an appearance of affection; an affection he had reason to believe was never more than feigned for him; and also from his emotions when with her, that he should never cease regretting the deception. His passions, exhausted by their own violence, had sunk into a calm, and

sadness was the predominant feeling of his soul. Though he so bitterly lamented, he could not at the moment have reproached her perfidy; he gazed on her with mournful tenderness, and to the involuntary expression of regret which dropped from her, on hearing he was ill, only replied by saying, "Ah, Amanda! the man that really excites your tenderness must be happy."

Amanda, unconscious that any sinister meaning lurked beneath these words, considered them as an acknowledgment of the happiness he himself experienced, from being convinced of her regard; and her heart swelled with pleasure at the idea.

Any further conversation between them was interrupted by Miss Malcolm, who, in a laughing manner, seated herself by Lord Mortimer, to rally him, as she said, into good spirits.

CHAP. XII.

————— But yet, I say,
If imputation and strong circumstances,
Which lead directly to the door of truth,
Will give you satisfaction, you may have it.

SHAKESPEARE.

FROM that evening, to the day destined for the ball, nothing material happened. On the morning of that day, as Amanda was sitting in the drawing-room with the ladies, Lord Mortimer entered. Lady Euphrasia could talk of nothing else but the approaching entertainment, which she said was expected to be the most brilliant thing that had been given that winter.

"I hope your Ladyship," said Amanda, who had not yet declared her intention of staying at home, "will be able to-morrow to give me a good description of it."

"Why, I suppose," cried Lady Euphrasia, "you do not intend going without being able to see and hear yourself."

"Certainly," replied Amanda, "I should not, but I do not intend going."

"Not go to the ball to-night?" exclaimed Lady Euphrasia.

"Bless

" Bless me, child," said Lady Greystock, " what whim has entered your head to prevent your going?"

" Dear Lady Greystock," said Lady Euphrasia, in a tone of unusual good humour, internally delighted at Amanda's resolution, " don't tease Miss Fitzalan with questions."

" And you really do not go?" exclaimed Lord Mortimer, in an accent expressive of surprise and disappointment.

" I really do not, my Lord."

" I declare," said the Marchioness, even more delighted than her daughter at Amanda's resolution, as it favoured a scheme she had long been projecting, " I wish Euphrasia was as indifferent about amusement as Miss Fitzalan. Here she has been complaining of indisposition the whole morning, yet I cannot prevail on her to give up the ball."

Lady Euphrasia, who never felt in better health and spirits, would have contradicted the Marchioness, had not an expressive glance assured her there was an important motive for this assertion.

" May we not hope, Miss Fitzalan," said Lord Mortimer, " that a resolution so suddenly adopted as your's may be as suddenly changed?"

" No, indeed, my Lord, nor is it so suddenly formed as you seem to suppose."

Lord Mortimer shuddered as he endeavoured to account for it in his own mind; his agony became almost

almost insupportable; he arose and walked to the window where she sat.

"Amanda," said he, in a low voice, "I fear you forget your engagement to me."

Amanda, supposing this alluded to her engagement for the ball, replied, "she had not forgotten it."

"For your inability, or disinclination to fulfil it then," said he, "will you not account?"

"Most willingly, my Lord."

"When?" asked Lord Mortimer, impatiently; for unable longer to support his torturing suspense, he determined, contrary to his first intention, to come to an immediate explanation relative to Belgrave.

"To-morrow, my Lord," replied Amanda, "since you desire it, I will account for not keeping my engagement; and I trust," a modest blush mantling her cheeks as she spoke, "that your Lordship will not disapprove of my reasons for declining it."

The peculiar earnestness of his words, Lord Mortimer imagined, had conveyed their real meaning to Amanda.

"Till to-morrow, then," sighed he, heavily, "I must bear disquietude."

His regret, Amanda supposed, proceeded from disappointment at not having her company at the ball; she was flattered by it, and pleased at the idea of telling him her real motive for not going; certain it would meet his approbation, and open another source of benevolence to poor Rushbrook.

In

In the evening, at Lady Euphrasia's particular request, she attended at her toilet, and assisted in ornamenting her Ladyship; at ten she saw the party depart, without the smallest regret for not accompanying them. Happy in self-approbation, a delightful calm was diffused over her mind; a treacherous calm, indeed, which, lulling her senses into security, made the approaching storm burst with redoubled violence on her head; it was such a calm as Shakespeare beautifully describes:

We often see against some storm
A silence in the heavens; the rack stand still,
The bold winds speechless, and the orb below
As hush as death.

She continued in Lady Euphrasia's dressing-room, and took up the beautiful and affecting story of Paul and Mary to amuse herself. Her whole attention was soon engrossed by it, and with the unfortunate Paul she was shedding a deluge of tears over the fate of his lovely Mary; when a sudden noise made her hastily turn her head, and, with equal horror and surprise, she beheld Colonel Belgrave coming forward. She started up, and was springing to the door, when rushing between her and it, he caught her in his arms, and forcing her back to the sofa, rudely stopped her mouth.

"Neither cries nor struggles, Amanda," said he,
"will be availing; without the assistance of a friend,
you

you may be convinced, I could not have entered this house; and the same friend will, you may depend on it, take care that our *tête-à-tête* is not interrupted."

Amanda shuddered at the idea of treachery, and being convinced, from what he said, she could not expect assistance, endeavoured to recover her fainting spirits, and exert all her resolution.

"Your scheme, Colonel Belgrave," said she, "is equally vile and futile; though treachery may have brought you hither, you must be convinced that, under the Marquis of Rosline's roof, who, by relationship, as well as hospitality, is bound to protect me, you dare not, with impunity, offer me any insult. The Marquis will be at home immediately; if therefore you wish to preserve the semblance of honour, retire without further delay."

"Not to retire so easily," exclaimed Belgrave, "did I take such pains, or watch so anxiously for this interview. Fear not any insult; but till I have revealed the purpose of my soul, I will not be forced from you. My love, or rather adoration, has known no abatement by your long concealment; and now that chance has so happily thrown you in my way, I will not neglect using any opportunity it may offer."

"Gracious Heaven!" said Amanda, while her eyes flashed with indignation, "how can you have the effrontery to avow your insolent intentions; intentions, which long since you must have known would ever prove abortive?"

"And

“And why, my Amanda,” said he, again attempting to strain her to his breast, while she shrunk from his grasp, “why should they prove abortive? why should you be obstinate in refusing wealth, happiness, the sincere, the ardent affection of a man, who, in promoting your felicity, would constitute his own? My life, my fortune, would be at your command; my eternal gratitude would be your’s for any trifling sacrifice the world might think you made me. Hesitate no longer about raising yourself to affluence, which, to a benevolent spirit like your’s, must be so peculiarly pleasing; hesitate not to secure independence to your father, promotion to your brother; and be assured, if the connection I formed in an ill-fated hour, deceived by a specious appearance of perfection, should ever be dissolved, my hand, like my heart, shall be your’s.”

“Monster!” exclaimed Amanda, beholding him with horror, “your hand, was it at your disposal, like your other offers, I should spurn with contempt; cease to torment me,” she continued, “least, in my own defence, I call upon those who have power, as well as inclination, to chastise your insolence. Let this consideration, joined to the certainty that your pursuit must ever prove unavailing, influence your future actions; for, be assured, you are in every respect an object of abhorrence to my soul.”

As she spoke, exerting all her strength, she burst from him, and attempted to gain the door. He flung himself

himself between her and it, his face inflamed with passion, and darting the most malignant glances at her.

Terrified by his looks, Amanda tried to avoid him; and when he caught her again in his arms, she screamed aloud. No one appeared: her terror increased.

"Oh, Belgrave!" cried she, trembling, "if you have one principle of honour, one feeling of humanity remaining, retire; I will pardon and conceal what is past, if you comply with my request."

"I distress you, Amanda," said he, assuming a softened accent, "and it wounds me to the soul to do so, though you, cruel and inexorable, care not what pain you occasion me; hear me calmly, and be assured I shall attempt no action which can offend you."

He led her again to the sofa, and thus continued:—

"Misled by false views, you shun and detest the only man who has had sufficient sincerity to declare openly his intentions; inexperience and credulity have already made you a dupe to artifice. You imagined Sir Charles Bingley was a fervent admirer of your's, when, be assured, in following you, he only obeyed the dictates of an egregious vanity, which flattered him with the hope of gaining your regard, and being distinguished by it. Nothing was farther from his thoughts, as he himself confessed to me, than seriously paying his addresses to you; and had
you

you appeared willing at last to accept them, be assured he would soon have contrived some scheme to disengage himself from you. The attentions of Lord Mortimer are prompted by a motive much more dangerous than that which instigated Sir Charles; he really admires you, and would have you believe his views are honourable; but beware of his duplicity; he seeks to take advantage of the too great confidence you repose in him. His purpose once accomplished, he would sacrifice you to Lady Euphrasia; and I know enough of her malevolent disposition to be convinced she would enjoy her triumph over so lovely a victim. Ah, my dear Amanda! even beauty and elegance like your's would not, on the generality of mankind, have power to make them forego the advantages annexed to wealth. On Lord Mortimer particularly they would fail of that effect; his ambition and avarice are equal to his father's; and though his heart and soul, I am confident, revolt from the mind and person of Lady Euphrasia, he will unite himself to her for the sake of possessing her fortune, and thus increasing his own power of procuring the gratifications he delights in. As my situation is known, I cannot be accused of deception, and whatever I promise will be strictly fulfilled; deliberate, therefore, no longer, my Amanda, on the course you shall pursue."

"No," cried she, "I shall indeed no longer deliberate about it."

As

As she spoke, she started from her seat. Belgrave again seized her hand. At this moment a knocking was heard at the hall door, which echoed through the house. Amanda trembled, and Belgrave paused in a speech he had begun. She supposed the Marquis had returned; it was improbable he would come to that room; and even if he did, from his distressful and malignant temper, she knew not whether she should have reason to rejoice or regret his presence. But how great was her confusion, when, instead of his voice, she heard those of the Marchioness and her party. In a moment the dreadful consequences which might ensue from her present situation rushed upon her mind. By the forced attentions of the Marchioness and Lady Euphrasia she was not long deceived, and had reason to believe, from the inveterate dislike they bore her, that they would rejoice at an opportunity like the present for traducing her fame; and with horror she saw that appearances, even in the eyes of candour, would be against her. She had positively, and unexpectedly, refused going to the ball; she had expressed delight at the idea of staying at home. Alas! would not all these circumstances be dwelt upon? What ideas might they not excite in Lord Mortimer, who already shewed a tendency to jealousy?

Half wild at the idea, she clasped her hands together, and exclaimed, in a voice trembling with anguish, "Merciful Heaven, I am ruined for ever!"

"No,

"No, no," cried Belgrave, flinging himself at her feet, "pardon me, Amanda, and I never more will molest you; I see your principles are invincible; I admire, I revere your purity, and never more will I attempt to injure it; I was on the point of declaring so when that cursed knock came to the door. Compose yourself, and consider what can be done in the present emergency; you will be ruined if I am seen with you. The malicious devils you live with would never believe our united asseverations of your innocence;—conceal me, therefore, if possible, till the family are settled; the person who let me in will then secure my retreat, and I swear solemnly never more to trouble you."

Amanda hesitated between the confidence her innocence inspired, and the dread of the unpleasant construction malice might put on her situation. She heard the party ascending the stairs; fear conquered her reluctance to concealment, and she motioned to Belgrave to retire to a closet adjoining the dressing-room. He obeyed the motion, and closed the door softly after him.

Amanda, snatching up her book, endeavoured to compose herself; but the effort was ineffectual; she trembled universally; nor was her agitation diminished, when, from the outside of the door, Lady Euphrasia called to her to open it. She tottered to it, and almost fainted on finding it locked; with difficulty she opened it, and the whole party, followed by the Marquis, entered.

"Upon

"Upon my word, Miss Fitzalan," said the Marchioness, "you were determined no one should disturb your meditations; I fear we have surprised you; but poor Euphrasia was taken ill at the ball, and we were obliged to return with her."

"Miss Fitzalan has not been much better, I believe," said Lady Euphrasia, regarding her attentively.

"Good Lord, child!" cried Lady Greystock, "what is the matter with you? why you look as pale as if you had seen a ghost."

"Miss Fitzalan is fond of solitude," exclaimed the Marquis, preventing her reply to Lady Greystock. "When I returned home about an hour ago, I sent to request her company in the parlour, which honour, I assure you, I was refused."

The message, indeed, had been sent, but never delivered to Amanda.

"I assure you, my Lord," said she, "I heard of no such request."

"And pray, child, how have you been employed all this time?" asked Lady Greystock.

"In reading, Madam," faltered out Amanda, while her death-like paleness was succeeded by a deep blush.

"You are certainly ill," said Lord Mortimer, who sat beside her, in a voice expressive of regret at the conviction; "you have been indulging melancholy ideas, I fear," continued he, softly, and taking her

her hand, "for surely, surely to-night you are uncommonly affected."

Amanda attempted to speak; the contending emotions of her mind prevented her utterance, and the tears trickled silently down her cheeks. Lord Mortimer saw she wished to avoid notice, yet scarcely could he forbear requesting some assistance for her.

Lady Euphrasia now complained of a violent headache: the Marchioness wanted to ring for remedies. This Lady Euphrasia opposed; at last, as if suddenly recollecting it, she said, "In the closet there was a bottle of *eau-de-luce*, which she was certain would be of service to her."

At the mention of the closet, the blood ran cold through the veins of Amanda; but when she saw Lady Euphrasia rise to enter it, had Death, in his most frightful form, stared her in the face, she could not have betrayed more horror. She looked towards it with a countenance as expressive of wild affright as Macbeth's, when viewing the chair on which the spectre of the murdered Banquo sat. Lord Mortimer, observing the disorder of her looks, began to tremble; he grasped her hand with a convulsive motion, and exclaimed,

"Amanda, what means this agitation?"

A loud scream from Lady Euphrasia broke upon their ears, and she rushed from the closet, followed by Belgrave.

“Gracious Heaven!” exclaimed Lord Mortimer, dropping Amanda’s hand, and rising precipitately.

Amanda looked around; she beheld every eye fastened on her with amazement and contempt: the shock was too much for her to support. A confused idea darted into her mind that a deep-laid plot had been concerted to ruin her; she faintly exclaimed, “I am betrayed,” and sunk back upon the sofa.

Lord Mortimer started at her exclamation. “Oh Heavens!” cried he, as he looked towards her, unable to support the scene that would ensue in consequence of this discovery; he struck his forehead in an agony, and rushed out of the room.

In the hall he was stopped by Mrs. Jane, the maid appointed by the Marchioness to attend Amanda.

“Alack-a-day, my Lord,” said she, in a whimpering voice, “something dreadful, I am afraid, has happened above stairs. Oh dear! what people suffer sometimes by their good nature! I am sure, if I thought any harm would come of granting Miss Fitzalan’s request, she might have begged and prayed long enough before I would have obliged her.”

“Did she desire you to bring Colonel Belgrave to this house?” asked Lord Mortimer.

“Oh! to be sure she did, my Lord, or how should I ever have thought of such a thing. She has been begging and praying long enough for me to contrive some way of bringing him here; and she told me a piteous story, which would have softened a stone, of
his

his being a sweetheart of her's before he was married."

"Merciful powers!" cried Lord Mortimer, clasping his hands together, "how have I been deceived!"

He was hurrying away, when Mrs. Jane caught his coat.

"I shall lose my place," said she, sobbing, "that I shall, most certainly, for my Lord and Lady never will forgive my bringing any one in such a way into the house; I am sure, I thought no great harm in it, and did it quite from good-nature; for, indeed, how could one resist the poor dear young lady; she cried, and said she only wanted to bid farewell to her dear Belgrave."

Lord Mortimer could hear no more; he shook her from him, and hurried from the house.

Amanda's faculties suffered but a momentary suspension; as she opened her eyes, her composure and fortitude returned.

"I am convinced," said she, rising and advancing to the Marquis, "it will shock your Lordship to hear that it is the treachery of some person under your roof has involved me in my present embarrassing situation; for my own justification, it is necessary to acknowledge that I have long been the object of a pursuit from Colonel Belgrave, as degrading to his character, as insulting to mine. When he broke so unexpectedly upon me to-night, he declared, even

with effrontery declared, he had a friend in this house who gave him access to it. As your guest, my Lord, I may expect your Lordship's protection; also that an immediate enquiry be made for the abettor in this scheme against me, and a full discovery of it extorted, that, should the affair be mentioned, it may be explained, and my fame cleared of every imputation."

"That, Madam," said the Marquis, with a malicious sneer, "would not be quite so easy a matter as you may perhaps suppose; neither the world nor I am so credulous as you imagine. Your story, Madam, by no means hangs well together; there is no person in my house would have dared to commit the act you accuse them of, as they must know the consequence of it would be immediate dismissal from my service. Had not Colonel Belgrave been voluntarily admitted, he never would have been concealed; no, Madam, you would have rejoiced at the opportunity our presence gave you of punishing his temerity. Innocence is bold; 'tis guilt alone is timorous."

The truth of part of his speech struck forcibly upon Amanda; but how could she explain her conduct? how declare it was her dread of the Marchioness and Lady Euphrasia's malice which had made her consent to conceal him?

"Oh! I see," said she, in the agony of her soul, "I see I am the dupe of complicated artifice."

"I never

"I never in my life," cried the Marchioness, "met with such assurance. To desire the Marquis to be her champion."

"As she was entrusted to my care, however, exclaimed Lady Greystock, "I think it necessary to enquire into the affair. Pray, Sir," turning to the Colonel, "by what means did you come here?"

The Colonel, with undiminished assurance, had hitherto stood near the fatal closet leaning on a chair.

"That, Madam," replied he, "I must be excused revealing; let me, however, assure your Ladyship it is not on my own account I affect concealment." Here he glanced at Amanda. "Those parts of my conduct, however, which I choose to conceal, I shall always be ready to defend."

"Sir," cried the Marquis; haughtily, "no explanation or defence of your conduct is here required; I have neither right nor inclination to interfere in Miss Fitzalan's concerns."

The Colonel bowed to the circle, and was retiring, when Amanda flew to him, and caught his arm. "Surely, surely," said she, almost gasping for breath, "you cannot be so inhuman as to retire without explaining this whole affair. Oh, Belgrave! leave me not a prey to slander; by all your hopes of mercy and forgiveness hereafter, I conjure you to clear my fame!"

"My dear creature," said he, in a low voice, yet loud enough to be heard by the whole party, "any
L 3 thing

thing I could say would be unavailing; you find they are determined not to see things in the light we wish them viewed. Compose yourself, I beseech you, and be assured, while I exist, you never shall want comfort or affluence."

He gently disengaged himself as he spoke, and quitted the room, leaving her rivetted to the floor in amazement at his insolence and perfidy.

"I am sure," said Lady Greyfoek, "I shall regret all my life the hour in which I took her under my protection; though, indeed, from what I heard soon after my arrival in London, I should have dispatched her back to her father; but I felt a foolish pity for her; I was in hopes, indeed, the society I had introduced her to would have produced a reformation, and that I might be the means of saving a young creature from entire destruction."

"From what I have already suffered by her family, nothing should have tempted me to take her under my roof," exclaimed the Marchioness.

"Was she my relation," cried the Marquis, "I should long since have come to a determination about her; as your's, Madam," turning to the Marchioness, "I shall not attempt forming one; I deem it, however, absolutely necessary to remove Lady Euphrasia Sutherland from the house till the young Lady chooses to quit it; I shall therefore order the carriage to be ready at an early hour for the villa."

"I shall

“ I shall certainly accompany your Lordship,” cried the Marchioness, “ for I cannot endure her sight ; and though she deserves it, it shall not be said that we turned her from the house.”

“ The only measure she should pursue,” exclaimed Lady Greystock, “ is to set off as soon as possible for Ireland ; when she returns to obscurity the affair may die away.”

“ It may, however,” said Amanda, “ be yet revived, to cover with confusion its contrivers. To Heaven I leave the vindication of my innocence ; its justice is sure, though sometimes slow, and the hour of retribution often arrives when least expected. Much as I have suffered, much as I may still suffer, I think my own situation preferable to their’s who have set their snares around me : the injurer must ever feel greater pangs than the injured—the pangs of guilt and remorse. I shall return to my obscurity, happy in the consciousness that it is not a shelter for shame, but a refuge from cruelty I seek ;—but can I be surprised at meeting cruelty from those who have long since waved the ties of kindred ?—from those,” and she glanced at Lady Greystock, “ who have set aside the claims of justice and humanity ?”

The Marchioness trembled with rage at this speech ; and as Amanda retired from the room, exclaimed, “ Intolerable assurance !”

Amanda repaired immediately to her chamber ; she

tottered as she walked, and the housekeeper and Mrs. Jane, who, with some other servants, had assembled out of curiosity near the door, followed her thither.

The emotions she had so painfully suppressed now burst forth with violence; she fell into an agony of tears and sobs, which impeded her breathing. The housekeeper and Jane loosened her clothes, and supported her to the bed. In a short time she was sufficiently recovered to be able to speak, and requested they would engage a carriage for her against the next day, at an early hour, that she might commence her journey to Ireland. This they promised, and at her desire retired.

Success, but not happiness, had crowned the Marchioness's scheme; she triumphed in the disgrace she had drawn upon Amanda, but feared that disgrace was only temporary; she had entangled her in a snare, but dreaded not having secured her in it; she distrusted those who had assisted her designs, for the guilty will ever suspect each other. They may betray her, or Colonel Belgrave might repent; but such evils, if they did ever arrive, were probably far distant; in the interim, all she desired to accomplish might be effected. Long had she been meditating on some plan which should ruin Amanda for ever, not only in the opinion of Lord Mortimer, but in the estimation of the world. With the profligacy of Colonel Belgrave she was well acquainted, and inclined

clined from it to believe, that he would readily join in any scheme which could give him a chance of possessing Amanda. On discovering her residence, he had ordered his valet, who was a trusty agent in all his villanies, to endeavour to gain access to the house, that he might discover whether there was a chance of introducing him there. The valet obeyed his orders, and soon attached himself to Mrs. Jane, whom the Marchioness had placed about Amanda, from knowing she was capable of any deceitful part. She was introduced to Belgrave, and a handsome present secured her in his interest.

She communicated to the Marchioness particulars of their interview; from that period they had been seeking to bring about such a scene as was at last acted, for the conduct of Amanda had hitherto defeated their intentions. Her staying from the ball at last gave the wished-for opportunity.

Lady Euphrasia was apprised of the whole plot, and the hint of her indisposition was given in the morning, that no suspicion might be entertained in the evening, when mentioned as a plea for returning home earlier than was intended.

Colonel Belgrave was introduced into the closet by Mrs. Jane, through a door that opened from the lobby; and whilst Amanda sat pensively reading, he stole out, and secured the other door, as already mentioned.

When Lady Euphrafia declared she was too ill to continue at the ball, Lord Mortimer offered to attend her home; had he not done so, the Marchioness intended to have asked him.

The Marquis was persuaded that Amanda was an artful and dangerous rival to his daughter, and he hated her from that consideration. The laws of hospitality obliged him to treat her with politeness, but he gladly seized the first opportunity that offered for expressing his dislike.

Lady Greystock saw through the plot, but she professed her belief of Amanda's guilt, which was all the Marchioness required.

The Marquis left the ladies together, while he went to give orders about his early journey.

Soon after his departure, a loud knocking was heard, which announced a visiter; and from the lateness of the hour, they conjectured, and were right in doing so, that it must be Lord Mortimer.

After traversing several streets in an agony no language could describe, he returned to Portman-Square. His fancy presented Amanda to his view, overwhelmed with shame, and sinking beneath the keen reproaches levelled at her; in the idea of her sufferings, all resentment for the supposed perfidy was forgotten; human nature was liable to err, and the noblest efforts that nature could make was to pardon such errors. To speak comfort to this fallen angel, he
felt

felt would relieve the weight which pressed upon his own breast. Pale and disordered, he entered the room, and found the ladies apparently much affected.

"My dear Lord," said the Marchioness, "I am glad you are come back; as a friend of the family, you may perhaps honour us with your advice on the present occasion."

"Indeed," exclaimed Lady Greystock, "I suppose his Lordship is at as great a loss to know what can be done as we are. Was the Colonel in a situation to make any reparation—but a married man—only think how horrible!"

"Execrable monster!" cried Lord Mortimer, starting from his seat, and traversing the room, "it were a deed of kindness to mankind to extirpate him from the earth; but say," continued he, and his voice faltered as he spoke, "where is the unfortunate ——?" He could not pronounce the name of Amanda.

"In her own room," replied the Marchioness; "I assure you she behaved with not a little insolence on Lady Greystock's advising her to return home; for my part, I shall let her act as she pleases."

She then proceeded to mention the Marquis's resolution of leaving the house till she had quitted it, and that he insisted on their accompanying him.

"To return to her father is certainly the only eligible plan she can pursue," said Lord Mortimer; "but allow me," continued he, "to request that

your Ladyship will not impute to insolence any expression which dropped from her ; pity her wounded feelings, and soften her sorrows."

" I declare," cried Lady Euphrasia, " I thought I should have fainted, from the pity I felt for her."

" You pitied her, then," said Lord Mortimer, sitting down by her Ladyship, " you pitied and soothed her afflictions?"

" Yes, indeed," replied she.

If ever Lady Euphrasia appeared pleasing in the eyes of Lord Mortimer it was at this moment, when he was credulous enough to believe she had shed the tear of pity over his lost Amanda.

He took her hand—" Ah, my dear Lady Euphrasia," said he, in an accent of melting softness, " perhaps even now she needs consolation ; a gentle female friend would be a comfort to her wounded heart."

Lady Euphrasia immediately took the hint, and said she would go to her.

He led her to the door. " You are going," cried he, " to perform the office of an angel, to console the afflicted. Ah ! well does it become the young and gentle of your sex to pity such misfortunes."

Her Ladyship retired, but not, indeed, to the chamber of the forlorn Amanda ; in her own she vented the rage of her soul, in something little short of execrations against Lord Mortimer for the affection she saw he still retained for Amanda.

On her Ladyship's retiring, Lady Greystock mentioned every particular she had heard from Mrs. Jennings, and bitterly lamented her having ever taken Amanda under her protection.

The subject was too painful to be long endured by Lord Mortimer. He had heard of the early hour fixed for their journey, and saying he would no longer keep the ladies from repose, precipitately retired. He gave his man directions to watch their motions, and inform him when they left town.

Exhausted by the violence of her emotions, a temporary forgetfulness stole over the senses of Amanda, on her being left to solitude. In this state she continued, till roused by a bustle in the house: she started, listened, and heard the sound of a carriage; supposing it to be the one she had ordered for her departure, she sprang from the bed, and going to the window, saw, instead of one for her, the Marquis's, into which he was handing the ladies. As soon as it drove from the door, she rang the bell, and the housekeeper immediately appeared, as Mrs. Jane had attended the Marchioness to the villa. Amanda enquired whether a carriage, as she directed, had been engaged for her.

The housekeeper replied, the hour in which she spoke was too late for such a purpose, but she had now sent about one.

Amanda endeavoured to exert herself, and was packing up her clothes, when a maid entered the chamber,

chamber, and said, Lord Mortimer was below, and wished to speak to her.

Tumultuous joy pervaded the mind of Amanda; she had believed it probable she should not see him again before her departure for Ireland, from whence she had determined writing to him the particulars of the affair. His visit seemed to announce he thought not unfavourably of her; she supposed he came to assure her that his opinion of her integrity was unshaken. "And I shall yet triumph," cried she, in the transport of the idea, "over malice and treachery."

She sprung past the maid; her feet scarce touched the ground, and in a moment she found herself in the arms of Lord Mortimer, which involuntarily opened to receive her; for trembling, weak, and disordered, she would else, on seeing him, have sunk to the floor.

He supported her to a sofa; in a little time she raised her head from his shoulder, and exclaimed, "Oh! you are come! I know you are come to comfort me!"

"Would to Heaven," he answered, "I were capable of either giving or receiving comfort! The period, however, I trust, may yet arrive, when we shall both, at least, be more composed. To mitigate your sorrows would lessen my own; for never, oh! never can my heart forget the love and esteem it once bore Amanda!"

"Once

“Once bore her!” repeated Amanda—“once bore her, Lord Mortimer, do you say! then you wish to imply they no longer exist?”

The tone of anguish in which she spoke pierced the heart of Mortimer; unable to speak, he arose, and walked to the window to hide his emotion.

His words, his silence, all conveyed a fatal truth to Amanda; she saw a dreadful and eternal separation effected between her and Lord Mortimer; she beheld herself deprived of reputation, loaded with calumny, and no longer an object of love, but of detestation and contempt.

Her anguish was almost too great to bear, yet the pride of injured innocence made her wish to conceal it; and as Lord Mortimer stood at the window, she determined to try and leave the room without his knowledge; but ere she gained the door, her head grew giddy, her strength failed, she staggered, faintly screamed on finding herself falling, and sunk upon the floor.

Lord Mortimer wildly called for assistance; he raised and carried her back to the sofa; he strained her to his bosom, kissed her pale lips, and wept over her.

“I have wounded your gentle soul, my Amanda,” cried he, “but I have tortured my own by doing so. Ah! still dearest of women, did the world compassionate your errors as I compassionate them, neither contempt nor calumny would ever be your portion.

How

How pale she looks!" said he, raising his head to gaze upon her face; "how like a lovely flower untimely faded! yet were it happiness for her never to revive; a soul like her's, originally noble, must be wretched under the pressure of scorn. Execrable Belgrave! the fairest work of Heaven is destroyed by you. Oh, my Amanda, my distress is surely severe! though anguish rives my heart for your loss, I must conceal it; the sad luxury of grief will be denied me, for the world would smile if I could say I now lamented you."

Such were the effusions of sorrow which broke from Lord Mortimer over the insensible Amanda. The housekeeper, who had been listening all this time, now appeared, as if in obedience to his call, and offered her assistance in recovering Amanda. Heavy sighs at length gave hopes of her restoration. Lord Mortimer, unable to support her pathetic lamentations, determined to depart ere she was perfectly sensible.

"Miss Fitzalan," said he to the housekeeper, "will wish, I am convinced, to quit this house immediately; I shall take upon myself to procure her a carriage, also a proper attendant for her journey, which, I flatter myself, she will be able to commence in a few hours. Be kind, be gentle to her, my good woman, and depend on my eternal gratitude. When she is recovered, deliver her this letter."

The housekeeper promised to observe his injunctions, and he departed.

To

To Ireland, with Amanda, he intended sending an old female servant, who had formerly been an attendant of his mother's, and his own man. He was shocked at the conduct of the Marchioness and Lady Greystock, and thought them guilty of the highest inhumanity in thus deserting Amanda. The letter he had put into the housekeeper's hands excited her curiosity so strongly, that she was tempted to gratify it. Amanda was not in a situation to perceive what she did; the letter could easily be sealed again, and, in short, without longer hesitation, she opened it. How great was her amazement on finding it contained a bank note for five hundred pounds. The words were as follow :—

“ Consider me, Amanda, in the light of a brother ; as such, accept my services : to serve you in any manner will be a source of consolation, which I flatter myself you will be happy to allow me. ’Tis necessary you should return immediately to your father ; hesitate not, then, about using the enclosed ; your complying with my request will prove that you yet retain a friendship for

MORTIMER.”

“ What a sum !” cried the housekeeper, as she examined the note—“ what a nice little independency would this, in addition to what I have already saved, be for an honest woman ! what a pity it is such a creature

creature as it is designed for should possess it!" The housekeeper, like her lady, was fertile in invention;—to be sure there was some danger in her present scheme, but for such a prize it was worth her while to run some risk. Could she but get Amanda off ere the carriage from Lord Mortimer arrived, she believed all would succeed as she could wish. Amanda, ignorant as she was of Lord Mortimer's intentions, would not consequently be influenced by them to oppose any thing she could do. Full of this idea, she ran out, and calling a footman, high in her favour, desired him immediately to procure a travelling chaise for Miss Fitzalan. She then returned to Amanda, who was just beginning to move.

"Come, come," cried she, going to her, and roughly shaking her shoulder, "have done with those tragedy airs, and prepare yourself against the carriage you ordered comes; it will be at the door in a few minutes."

Amanda looked round the room—"Is Lord Mortimer gone then?" said she.

"Lord, to be sure he is!" cried the housekeeper; "he left you on the floor; and as he went out, he said you should never have another opportunity of deceiving him."

A sudden frenzy seemed to seize Amanda; she wrung her hands, called upon Lord Mortimer in the impassioned language of despair, and flung herself on
the

the ground, exclaiming, "This last stroke is more than I can bear!"

The housekeeper grew alarmed, lest her agitation should retard her departure; she raised her forcibly from the ground, and said she must compose herself to begin her journey, which was unavoidable, as the Marchioness had given absolute orders to have her sent from the house early in the morning."

"Accursed house!" said Amanda, whose reason was restored by the strenuous remonstrances of the housekeeper, "Oh that I had never entered it!" She then told her companion, if she would assist her, as she was almost too weak to do any thing for herself, she would be ready against the carriage came. The housekeeper and a maid accordingly attended her to her chamber; the former brought her drops, and the latter assisted in putting on her habit, and packing up her clothes. Amanda having secured her trunks, desired they might be sent, by the first opportunity, to Castle Carberry; she had left a great many clothes there, so took nothing at present with her but a small quantity of linen. She had but a few guineas in her purse; her watch, however, was valuable; and if she had money enough to carry her to Dublin, she knew there she might procure a sufficient sum on it to carry her home.

At last the carriage came; with a trembling frame, and half-broken heart, Amanda entered it. She saw Nicholas, the footman, who had procured it, ready
mounted

mounted to attend her. She told him it was unnecessary to do so, but he declared he could not think of letting so young a lady travel unprotected. She was pleased at his attention; she had shuddered at the idea of her forlorn situation, and now dropped a tear of sweet sensibility at finding she was not utterly deserted by every human being. The carriage took the road to Parkgate, as Amanda chose to embark from thence, the journey being so much nearer to it than to Holyhead. It was now about eight o'clock; after travelling four hours, the chaise stopped at a small house on the road side, which appeared to be a common alehouse. Amanda was unwilling to enter it, but the horses were here to be changed; and she was shewn into a dirty parlour, where, almost sinking with weakness, she ordered tea to be immediately brought in. She was much astonished as she sat at the tea-table to see Nicholas enter the room with a familiar air, and seat himself by her. She stared at him at first, supposing him intoxicated; but perceiving no signs of this in his countenance, began to fear that the insults she had received at the Marquis's made him think himself authorized to treat her with this insolence. She arose abruptly, and summoning all her resolution to her aid, desired him to retire, adding, if his attendance was requisite, she would ring for him."

Nicholas also quitted his seat, and following her, caught her in his arms, exclaiming, "Bless us, how hoity-toity you are grown!"

Amanda

Amanda shrieked, and stamped on the floor in an agony of terror and indignation.

"Why now really," said he, "after what happened at home, I think you need not be so coy with me."

"Oh, save me, Heaven, from this wretch!" was all the affrighted Amanda could articulate.

The door opened, a waiter appeared, and told Nicholas he was wanted without. Nicholas released Amanda, and ran directly from the room. Amanda sunk upon a chair, and her head turned giddy at the idea of the dangers with which she was surrounded. She saw herself in the power of a wretch, perhaps wretches, for the house seemed a proper place for scenes of villany, without the means of delivering herself. She walked to the window; a confused idea of getting through it, and running from the house, darted into her mind, but she turned from it in agony at seeing a number of countrymen drinking before it. She now could only raise her feeble hands to Heaven to supplicate its protection.

She passed some minutes in this manner, when the lock turned and made her shudder; but it was the landlady alone who entered; she came, she said, with Nicholas's respectful duty, and he was sorry he was obliged to go back to town without seeing her safe to her journey's end.

"Is he really gone?" asked Amanda, with all the eagerness of joy.

"Yes,"

"Yes," the woman said, "a person had followed him from London on purpose to bring him back."

"Is the carriage ready?" cried Amanda.

She was informed it was.

"Let me fly, then," said she, running to the door, "let me fly, or the wretch may return."

The landlady impeded her progress to tell her the bill was not yet settled. Amanda pulled out her purse, and besought her not to detain her. This the woman had no desire to do; things were therefore settled without delay between them, and Amanda was driven with as much expedition as she could desire from the terrifying mansion. The chaise had proceeded about two miles, when, in the middle of a solitary road, or rather lane, by the side of a wood, it suddenly stopped. Amanda, alarmed at every incident, hastily looked out, and enquired what was the matter; but how impossible to describe the terror, when she beheld Colonel Belgrave, and Nicholas standing by him. She shrunk back, and entreated the postillion to drive on; but he heeded not her entreaty. Nicholas opened the door, and Belgrave sprang into the carriage. Amanda attempted to burst open the door at the opposite side; but he caught her to his bosom, and the horses set off at full speed. Colonel Belgrave's valet had been secreted by Mrs. Jane the preceding night in the house, that he might be able to give his master intelligence of all that passed within it, in consequence of his being discovered

covered in the closet. On hearing the family were gone to the Marquis's villa, Belgrave believed he could easily prevail on the domestics to deliver up Amanda to him. Elated with this hope, he reached the house, attended by his valet, just after she had quitted it. The housekeeper hesitated to inform him of the road she had taken, till she had procured what she knew would be the consequence of her hesitation, a large bribe. Horses were then immediately procured, and Belgrave and his servant set off in pursuit of Amanda. The sight of a travelling chaise at the little inn already mentioned prompted their enquiries; and on finding the chaise waited for Amanda, the Colonel retired to a private room, sent for Nicholas, and secured him in his interest. It was settled they should repair to the wood, by which the postillion was bribed to pass, and from thence proceed to a country-house of the Colonel's. Their scheme accomplished, Nicholas, happy in the service he had done, or rather the reward he had obtained for that service, again turned his face towards London.

The carriage and attendants Lord Mortimer procured for Amanda arrived even earlier than the housekeeper had expected, and she blessed her lucky stars for the precipitancy with which she had hurried off Amanda.

They were followed by his Lordship himself, whose wretched heart could not support the idea of letting Amanda depart without once more beholding her.

Great

Great was his dismay, his astonishment, when the housekeeper informed him she was gone.

"Gone!" he repeated, changing colour.

The housekeeper said, that, without her knowledge, Miss Fitzalan had a chaise hired, and the moment it came to the door, stepped into it, notwithstanding she was told his Lordship meant to provide every thing proper for her journey himself; "but she said, my Lord," cried the housekeeper, "she wanted none of your care, and that she could never get fast enough from a house, or from people where, and by whom, she had been so ill treated."

Lord Mortimer asked if she had any attendant, and whether she took the letter.

The housekeeper answered both these questions in the affirmative. "Truly, my Lord," she continued, "I believe your Lordship said something in that letter which pleased her, for she smiled on opening it, and said, 'Well, well, this is something like comfort.'"

"And was she really so mean?" he was on the point of asking, but he timely checked a question which was springing from a heart that sickened at finding the object of its tenderest affections unworthy in every respect of possessing them. Every idea of this kind soon gave way to anxiety on her account; his heart misgave him at her undertaking so long a journey under the protection of a common servant; and unable to endure his apprehensions, he determined

mined instantly to pursue, and see her safe himself to the destined port.

The woman, who had hitherto sat in the chaise, was ordered to return home; he entered it with eagerness, and promised liberally to reward the postillions if they used expedition. They had changed horses but once, when Lord Mortimer saw Nicholas approaching, whom, at the first glance, he knew. He stopped the carriage, and called out, "Where have you left Miss Fitzalan?"

"Faith, my Lord," cried Nicholas, instantly stopping, and taking off his hat, "in very good company; I left her with Colonel Belgrave, who was waiting, by appointment, on the road for her."

"Oh, horrible insatuation!" said Lord Mortimer, "that nothing can snatch her from the arms of infamy!"

The postillion desired to know whether he should return to London.

Lord Mortimer hesitated, and at last desired him to go on, according to his first directions. He resolved to proceed to Parkgate, and discover whether Amanda had returned to Ireland. They had not proceeded far, when they overtook a travelling chaise. As Lord Mortimer passed, he looked into it, and beheld Amanda reclined on the bosom of Belgrave. He trembled universally, closed his eyes, and sighed out the name of the perfidious Amanda. When they had gone some way before the other

VOL. II. M chaise,

chaife, he desired the postillion to strike off into another road, which, by a circuit of a few miles, would bring them back to London. Amanda, it was evident, had put herself under the protection of Belgrave, and to know whether she went to Ireland was now of little consequence to him, as he supposed her unreclaimable; but how impossible to describe his distress and confusion, when almost the first object he beheld, on alighting in St. James's Square, was his aunt, Lady Martha Dormer, who, in compliance with his urgent request, had hastened to London! Had a spectre crossed his sight, he could not have been more shocked.

"Well, my dear Frederick," said her Ladyship, "you see I lost no time in obeying your wishes; I have flown hither, I may indeed say, on the wings of love: but where is this little divinity of thine? I long to have a peep at her goddessship."

Lord Mortimer, inexpressibly shocked, turned to the window.

"I shall see, to be sure," cried her Ladyship, "quite a little paragon; positively, Frederick, I will be introduced this very evening."

"My dear aunt, my dear Lady Martha," said Lord Mortimer, impatiently, for Heaven's sake spare me!"

"But tell me," she continued, "when I shall commence this attack upon your father's heart?"

"Never, never," sighed Mortimer, half distracted.

"What,

“What, you suppose he will prove inflexible? but I do not despair of convincing you to the contrary. Tell me, Frederick, when the little charmer is to be seen?”

“Oh God!” cried Mortimer, striking his forehead, “she is lost,” said he, “she is lost for ever!”

Lady Martha was alarmed; she now, for the first time, noticed the wild and pallid looks of her nephew.

“Gracious Heaven!” she exclaimed, “what is the matter?”

The dreadful explanation Lord Mortimer now found himself under a necessity of giving, the shame of acknowledging he was so deceived, the agony he suffered from that deception, joined to the excessive agitation and fatigue he had suffered the preceding night and the present day, so powerfully assailed him at this moment, that his senses suddenly gave way, and he actually fainted on the floor.

What a sight for the tender Lady Martha! She saw something dreadful had happened, and what this was Lord Mortimer, as soon as recovered, informed her.

He then retired to his chamber; he could neither converse, nor bear to be conversed with; his fondest hopes were blasted; nor could he forego the sad indulgence of mourning over them in solitude; he felt almost convinced that the hold Amanda had on his affections could not be withdrawn; he had considered her as scarcely less than his wife; and had she

been really such, her present conduct could not have given more anguish. Had she been snatched from him by the hand of Death, had she been wedded to a worthy character, he could have summoned fortitude to his aid: but to find her the prey of a villain was a stroke too horrible to bear, at least for a long period, with patience.



CHAP. XIII.

And let a maid thy pity share,

Who seeks for Rest, but finds Despair
Companion of her way.

GOLDSMITH.

AMANDA had fainted soon after Colonel Belgrave entered the carriage, and she was reclining on his bosom in a state of insensibility when Lord Mortimer passed. In this situation she continued, till they had gained a solitary road, when the carriage stopped, and water, procured from an adjacent cottage, being sprinkled on her face, she recovered; but either by arguments

arguments or actions she was now unable to oppose Belgrave. She felt a weakness through her whole frame, which she believed the forerunner of death; and a languor on her mind, that almost deprived it of the perception of misery.

The refreshments offered to her she could only refuse by a motion of her hand, and in this manner they proceeded till about nine o'clock at night, when they entered an extensive wood, in the very centre of which stood Colonel Belgrave's mansion. He carried Amanda himself into it, and laid her upon a sofa in a large parlour. Some female domestics appeared with drops and cordials, to try and recover her from the almost lifeless state in which she lay. One of them presented a letter to the Colonel, which excited no little perturbation in his mind; it came express to inform him that his uncle, whose estate and title he was heir to, lay at the point of death, and that his presence was immediately required.

The Colonel was not so absolutely engrossed by love as to be incapable of attending to his interest. An addition of fortune was extremely agreeable, as his affairs were somewhat deranged; and as Amanda was not in a situation at present to comply with any overtures he should make, his resolution was immediately formed to set off without delay; and against his return, he trusted Amanda would be not only recovered, but willing to accede to his wishes.

He dismissed the woman who had brought her a little to herself, and taking her hand, informed her of the painful necessity he was under of departing for a short time; he also mentioned his hopes, that, on his return, he should have no obstacle thrown in the way of his happiness by her. "You must be sensible, my dear Amanda," said he, with coolness, "that your reputation is as much gone as if you had complied with my wishes; since it is sacrificed, why not enjoy the advantages that may, that will certainly attend the reality of that sacrifice?"

"Monfieur!" cried Amanda, "your arts may have destroyed my fame, but my innocence bids defiance to your power."

"Conquer your obstinacy, Amanda," replied he, "against I return, or I shall not promise but what I may be at last irritated. As you will have no occasion for money here, you must excuse me, my dear creature, if I take your purse into my own keeping; my domestics may be faithful, when they have no inducement to the contrary; but no bribery, no corruption, you know."

He then very deliberately took Amanda's purse and watch from her pocket, and deposited them in his own. He had already given directions to his servants concerning their treatment of Amanda, and now ordered them to carry her to a chamber, and make her take some refreshment.

"Reflect,

"Reflect, Amanda," said he, ere she retired, "on your present situation, and timely estimate the advantages I offer to your acceptance; wealth, pleasure, the attentions of a man who adores you, are not to be despised. Upon my soul it grieves me to leave you; but the joys of meeting will, I trust, pay the pangs of absence."

As he spoke, he attempted to embrace her, but she faintly shrieked, and sunk from his grasp. He looked provoked; but, as he had no time to lose, he reserved a declaration of his anger for another opportunity, and directly set off for his uncle's.

Amanda was supported to a chamber, and lay down in her clothes on a bed. They offered her bread and wine, but she was too sick to touch any. To remonstrate with the insolent looking creatures who surrounded her she knew would be unavailing, and she turned her face on the pillow to stifle her sobs, as she believed they would exult in her distress. Death she thought approaching, and the idea of being separated from the dear objects, who would have soothed its last pangs, was dreadful; her father in agony, and Oscar, her beloved brother, bewailing her with tears of sorrow, were the images fancy presented to her view.

"Dear objects of my love!" she softly exclaimed, "Amanda shall no more behold you, but her last sigh will be breathed for you. Ah! why, why," she
M 4
cried,

cried, "did I suffer myself to be separated from my father?"

A young woman leaned over Amanda, and surveyed her with the most malignant scrutiny; she was daughter to Belgrave's steward, and neither she nor her father possessed sufficient virtue to make them reject the offers Belgrave made them on her account. His attachment to her was violent, but transient, and in the height of it he made her mistress of the mansion she now occupied, which character she maintained with tyrannic sway over the rest of the domestics. Belgrave was really ignorant of the violence of her temper, and had no idea she would dare dispute his inclinations, or disobey his orders; he believed she would be subservient to both, and from this belief gave Amanda particularly into her charge.

But scarcely had she departed, ere she swore, that, let the consequence be what it would, the vile wretch he had brought into the house to insult her should never remain in it. "She shall tramp," cried she, "though I follow her myself when he returns, for such a little buffy shall never triumph over me!"

The servants, ignorant and timorous, did not attempt to oppose her.

"Come, Madam," said she, suddenly seizing Amanda's arm, and pulling her from the pillow, "have done with these languishing airs, and march!"

"What

“What do you mean?” cried Amanda, trembling at her inflamed countenance.

“Why I mean you shall quit this house directly; and I wonder Colonel Belgrave could have the assurance to bring such a creature as you into it.”

“You mistake, indeed,” said Amanda; “treachery, not inclination, brought me into it, and I am not what you suppose. If, as you say, you will allow me to depart, I shall ever regard you as my friend, and in every prayer I offer up to Heaven for myself, you shall be remembered.”

“Oh dear! but you shall not impose upon me so easily. Come,” continued she, turning to a maid, “and help me to conduct this fine lady to the hall-door.”

“Gracious Heaven!” said Amanda, who by this time was taken, or rather dragged, from the bed, “what are you about doing with me? though I rejoice to quit the house, yet surely, surely,” she cried, and her soul recoiled at the idea, “without a guide, at this hour of the night, you will not turn me from it.”

She then mentioned Colonel Belgrave’s having deprived her of her purse and watch, and besought the woman, in the most pathetic terms, to supply her with a small sum, which she solemnly assured her should be returned as soon as she reached her friends; and ended with saying, she should depart with gratitude and joy if she complied with her request, and

allowed some one to guide her to a place where she might procure a carriage.

"Such madams as you," replied the imperious woman, "are never at a loss for means of procuring money, or a place to go to. I see through your art well enough; you want me to pity you, that I may let you stay till your Colonel returns; but who would be fool then, I wonder? The tables, I warrant, would soon be turned upon me;—no, no, out you go this moment."

So saying, she rudely seized Amanda, and, assisted by another woman, hurried her down stairs, and out of the house directly they carried her to an intricate part of the wood, and then ran back, leaving the helpless mourner leaning against a tree.

Amanda looked around her; dark and awful were the shades of the wood; no light appeared but what came from a few wandering stars, which only served to render darkness visible. "Have mercy upon me, Heaven!" groaned Amanda, as she felt herself sinking to the earth. The cold acted as a kind of restorative, and almost immediately revived her. She rested her head against a little bank; and as she thus reclined, a tender sadness pervaded her soul at the idea of her father's sorrow when he heard of her fate. "When he hears," cried she, "that I was driven from the house, as unworthy of pity or protection from any being; that his Amanda, whom he cherished in his bosom, as the darling of his age, was denied the pity

he would have shewn the greatest wretch that crawls upon the earth, and that she perished without shelter, it will break his heart entirely. Poor Oscar, too—alas! I shall be a source of wretchedness to both. Will Lord Mortimer lament when he hears of my fate? Alas! I cannot believe that he will: he that could leave me in the arms of insensibility, and so readily believe ill of me, must have a heart steeled against compassion for my sufferings. But my unhappy father and brother will never doubt my innocence, and by them I shall be tenderly and truly mourned."

The idea of their sufferings at last recalled her wandering thoughts, and pity for those sufferings made her endeavour to support her own, that she might be able to make some efforts for preserving a life so precious to them;—besides, as she reflected, she could not but attribute her expulsion from the house of infamy to the immediate interposition of Providence in her favour; and whilst her heart swelled with gratitude at the idea, her fortitude gradually returned. She arose, but the vigour of her nerves was not equal to the ardour of her intentions: she walked on, and as she proceeded, the gloom grew more profound, the paths were intricate, and her progress was often impeded by the roots of trees, and the branches that grew about them. After wandering about a considerable time, she at last began to think that, instead of gaining the skirts, she had penetrated into the very

centre of the wood, and that to quit it till morning would be impossible. Yielding to this idea, or rather to her excessive weariness, she was seeking for a place to sit down on, when a faint light glimmered before her. She instantly darted through the path from whence it gleamed, and found herself at the extremity of the wood, and that the light proceeded from a small hamlet contiguous to it. Thither she walked, as fast as her trembling limbs would carry her. A profound stillness reigned around, only interrupted by the hoarse and hollow barking of some distant dogs, which, in such an hour, had something particularly solemn in it. The stillness and sudden disappearance of lights from various windows, convinced Amanda that every cottage was closed for the night. "And were they open," said she, "I perhaps should be denied access to any, deprived as I am of the means of rewarding kindness." She shuddered at the idea of passing a night unsheltered. "It is now, indeed," said she, "I really know what it is to feel for the houseless children of want." She moved softly along; the echo of her own steps alarmed her; she had nearly reached the end of the hamlet, when before a neat cottage, divided from the others by a clump of old trees, she saw a venerable man, who might well have passed for an ancient hermit. His grey locks thinly shaded his forehead; an expression of deep and pensive thought was visible in his countenance; his arms were folded on his breast, and his eyes

eyes were raised with a tender melancholy to Heaven, as if that Heaven he contemplated was now the abode of some kindred and lamented spirit. Surely such a being, thought she, will pity me. She approached him, stood close to him, yet was unnoticed. Thrice she attempted to speak, and thrice her heart failed her; at last she summoned all her courage to her aid, and faintly articulated, "Pity—" She could add no more, but fainted at his feet. The stranger's mind was fraught with all the benevolence his countenance depicted; the transient glance he had caught of Amanda interested every tender feeling; he called to his servant, an elderly woman, his only companion in the cottage, to assist him in conveying her in. This woman's heart was as tender as her master's; and the youth, the beauty, and forlorn situation of Amanda, equally excited their wonder and pity. It was many minutes ere she opened her eyes; and when she did, her senses were quite bewildered. "And my father! alas! my father, I shall never more behold him!" was all she could articulate.

She was supported to a small chamber; the old woman undressed her, put her to-bed, and sat up with her the remainder of the night. Amanda often started; she raved continually of Belgrave, the author of her woes, and betrayed the strongest horror. The wound he had inflicted on her heart, she said, the hand of death could only heal. She mentioned the
cruelty

cruelty of the Marchioness, called upon her father to save her from destruction, and reproached Mortimer for aiding to overwhelm her in disgrace. She continued in this situation three days; during which the old man and his faithful servant watched her with unremitted attention. A neighbouring apothecary was summoned to her aid, and a girl from one of the cottages procured to sit up with her at night. The old man frequently knelt by the bedside, watching with anxiety for a favourable symptom. Her incoherent expressions pierced him to the heart; he felt, from mournful sympathy, for the father she so pathetically mentioned, and invoked Heaven to restore her to him.

The afternoon of the third day, Amanda, after a long slumber, awoke, perfectly restored to her senses; it was many minutes, however, after her awaking, ere she recollected all the circumstances that had caused her present situation.

She at last opened the curtain, and perceived the old woman, whom we shall hereafter call Eleanor, seated by the bedside.

"I fear," said she, with a languid smile, "I have been the occasion of a great deal of trouble."

"No, no," replied the kind Eleanor, delighted to hear her speak so calmly, and drawing back a little of the curtain at the same time to observe her looks.

Amanda enquired how long she had been ill. Eleanor informed her, and added, "Heaven, my dear

dear child, was kind to you in throwing you in my master's way, who delights in befriending the helpless."

"Heaven will reward him!" exclaimed Amanda.

The chamber was gloomy; she requested one of the shutters might be opened. Eleanor complied with her desire, and a ray of the declining sun darting through the casement, cheered her pensive heart.

She perfectly remembered the venerable figure she had beheld on the threshold of the cottage, and was impatient to express her gratitude to him. The next day, she trusted, would give her an opportunity of doing so, as she then resolved, if possible, to rise. The wish of her soul was to be with her father. Ere he could receive any intimation of what had happened, she resolved to communicate to her benevolent host the incidents which had placed her in such a situation; and she flattered herself, on hearing them, he would accommodate her with the means of returning to Ireland; if unable (unwilling she could not think she should find him) to do this, she then intended writing to her father. This measure, however, she fervently trusted, she should have no occasion to take, as she well knew the shock such a letter would give him.

Contrary to the inclination of Eleanor, she rose the next day; and as soon as she was dressed, sent to request Mr. Howell's company. Eleanor had informed her of her master's name.

The

The chamber was on a ground floor ; before the windows were a row of neat white cottages, and behind them rose a range of lofty hills, covered to the very summit with trees, now just bursting into verdure. Before the cottage ran a clear murmuring rivulet, at which some young girls were washing clothes, whilst others spread them upon hedges, and all beguiled their labour with singing, chatting, and laughing together.

“ Ah, happy creatures ! ” cried Amanda, “ screened by your native hills, you know nothing of the vices or miseries of the great world ; no snares lurk beneath the flowery paths you tread, to wring your hearts with anguish, and nip the early blossoms of your youth. ”

The old man appeared, and interrupted her meditations. When he beheld the pale face of Amanda beaming with angelic sweetness, when he saw her emaciated hand extended towards him, while her soft voice uttered her grateful acknowledgements, his emotions could not be suppressed ; he pressed her hand between his, tears rolled down the furrows of his face, and he exclaimed—

“ I thank the Almighty for reviving this sweet flower ! ”

A deep sob from Amanda proved how much he had affected her feelings.

He was alarmed, and hastily endeavoured to compose his own, out of regard to her's.

When

When a little composed, with grateful sweetness she continued to thank him for his kindness.

"Pity," said she, "is a sweet emotion to excite; yet from you, without esteem, it would be humiliating; and esteem I cannot flatter myself with obtaining, till I have accounted for being a wretched wanderer."

She then gave a brief account of her father, and the events of her life.

"Ah, my dear!" cried the old man, as she finished her narrative, "you have reason, indeed, to regret your knowledge of Belgrave, but the sorrow he has occasioned you, I believe and trust, will be but transient; that which he has given me will be lasting as my life. You look astonished; alas! but for him, I might now have been blessed with a daughter as lovely and as amiable as Fitzalan's. I see you are too delicate to express the curiosity my words have inspired, but I shall not hesitate to gratify it; my relation will draw the tear of pity from your eye, but the sorrows of others often reconcile us to our own."

CHAP. XIV.

And oft, as ease and health retire,
To breezy lawn, or forest deep,
The friend shall view yon whitening spire,
And 'mid the varied landscape weep;
But thou who own'st that earthy bed,
Ah! what will every dirge avail!"

COLLIN'S ODE ON THOMSON.

MANY years are now elapsed since I took up my residence in this sequestered hamlet. I retired to it in distaste with a world, whose vices had robbed me of the dearest treasure of my heart. Two children cheered my solitude, and in training them up to virtue, I lost the remembrance of half my cares. My son, when qualified, was sent to Oxford, as a friend had promised to provide for him in the church; but my daughter was destined to retirement, not only from the narrowness of my income, but from a thorough conviction it was best calculated to ensure her felicity. Juliana was the child of innocence and content; she knew of no greater happiness than that of promoting mine, of no pleasures but what the hamlet could afford, and was once of the gayest, as
well

well as the loveliest, of its daughters. One fatal evening I suffered her to go, with some of her young companions, to a rustic ball, given by the parents of Belgrave to their tenants, on coming down to Woodhouse, from which they had been long absent. The graces of my child immediately attracted the notice of their son; though young in years, he was already a professed libertine; the conduct of his father had set him an example of dissipation, which the volatility of his own disposition too readily inclined him to follow. His heart immediately conceived the basest schemes against Juliana, which the obscurity of her situation prompted him to think might readily be accomplished.

From this period he took every opportunity of throwing himself in her way; my suspicions, or rather my fears, were soon excited, for I knew not then the real depravity of Belgrave; but I knew that an attachment between him and my daughter would prove a source of uneasiness to both, from the disparity fortune had placed between them. My task in convincing Juliana of the impropriety of encouraging such an attachment was not a difficult one; but, alas! I saw the conviction was attended with a pang of anguish, which pierced me to the soul.

Belgrave, from the assumed softness and delicacy of his manners, had made an impression on her heart, which was not to be erased; every effort, however, which prudence could suggest, she resolved to make,
and

and in compliance with my wishes avoided Belgrave. This conduct soon convinced him it would be a difficult matter to lull my caution, or betray her innocence; and finding all his attempts to see or convey a letter to her ineffectual, he departed with his parents from Woodhouse.

Juliana heard of his departure with a forced smile, but a starting tear, and a colourless cheek, too clearly denoted to me the state of her mind. I shall not attempt to describe my sufferings on witnessing her's; with my pity was mixed a degree of veneration for that virtue, which in so young a mind could make such exertions against a passion disapproved of by a parent. The evening of his departure, no longer under any restraint, she walked out alone, and instinctively, perhaps, took the road to Woodhouse. She wandered to its deepest glooms; and there gave way to emotions which, from her efforts to suppress them, were become almost too painful to support. The gloom of the wood was heightened by the shades of evening, and a solemn stillness reigned around, well calculated to inspire pensive tenderness. She sighed the name of Belgrave in tremulous accents, and lamented their ever having met. A sudden rustling among the trees startled her, and the next moment she beheld him at her feet, exclaiming, "We have met, my Juliana, never more to part!"

Surprise and confusion so overpowered her senses, as to render her for some time unable to attend to his raptures.

raptures. When she grew composed, he told her he was returned to make her honourably his; but to effect this intention, a journey from the hamlet was requisite.

She turned pale at these words, and declared she never would consent to a clandestine measure.

This declaration did not discourage Belgrave; he knew the interest he had in her heart, and this knowledge gave an energy to his arguments, which gradually undermined the resolution of Juliana. Already, he said, she had made a sufficient sacrifice to filial duty; sure'y something was now due to love like his, which, on her account, would cheerfully submit to innumerable difficulties. As he was under age, a journey to Scotland was unavoidable, he said, and he would have made me his confident on the occasion, but that he feared my scrupulous delicacy would have opposed his intentions, as contrary to parental authority. He promised Juliana to bring her back to the hamlet immediately after the ceremony; in short, the plausibility of his arguments, the tenderness of his persuasions, and the secret impulses of her heart, at last produced the effect he wished, and he received a promise from her, to put herself under his protection that very night.

But, oh! how impossible to describe my agonies the ensuing morning, when, instead of my child, I found a letter in her room, informing me of her elopement! They were such as a fond parent trembling
for

for the fame and happiness of his child may conceive. My senses must have sunk beneath them had they long continued ; but Belgrave, according to his promise, hastened back my child ; and as I sat solitary and pensive in the apartment she so often had enlivened, I suddenly beheld her at my feet, supported by Belgrave, as his wife. So great a transition from despair to comfort was almost too powerful for me to support. I asked my heart, was its present happiness real ? I knelt, I received my child in my arms ; in those feeble arms I seemed to raise her with my heart to Heaven in pious gratitude for her returning unfulfilled. Yet, when my first transports were abated, I could not help regretting her ever having consented to a clandestine union. I entreated Belgrave to write, in the most submissive terms, to his father. He promised to comply with my entreaty, yet hinted his fears that his compliance would be unattended with the success I hoped. . He requested, if this should be the case, I would allow his wife to reside in the cottage till he was of age. Oh, how pleasing a request to my heart ! a month passed away in happiness, only allayed by not hearing from his father. At the expiration of that time he declared he must depart, having received orders to join his regiment, but promised to return as soon as possible ; he also promised to write, but a fortnight elapsed, and no letter arrived.

Juliana and I grew alarmed, but it was an alarm that only proceeded from fears of his being ill. We

were

were sitting one morning at breakfast, when the stopping of a carriage drew us from the table.

"He is come!" said Juliana, "he is come!" and she flew to open the door, when, instead of her expected Belgrave, she beheld his father, whose dark and haughty visage proclaimed that he came on no charitable intent. Alas! the occasion of his visit was too soon explained; he came to have the ties which bound his son to Juliana broken. My child, on hearing this, with firmness declared, that she was convinced any scheme his cruelty might devise to separate them, the integrity, as well as tenderness of his son, would render abortive.

"Be not too confident of that, young Lady," cried he, smiling maliciously. He then proceeded to inform her, that that Belgrave, so beloved, and in whose integrity she so confided, had himself authorised his intentions, being determined to avail himself of nonage, to have the marriage broke.

Juliana could hear no more; she sunk fainting on the bosom of her wretched father. Oh! what a situation was mine, when, as I clasped her wildly to my heart, and called upon her to revive, that heart whispered me, it was cruelty to wish she should! Alas! too soon she did, to a keen perception of misery. The marriage was dissolved, and health and happiness fled from her together; yet, from compassion to me, I saw she struggled to support the burthen of existence. Every remedy which had a chance of prolonging

prolonging it I administered ; but, alas ! sorrow was rooted in her heart, and it was only its removal, which was impossible, that could have effected her recovery. Oh, how often have I stolen from my bed to the door of her apartment, trembling, lest I should hear the last groan escape her lips ! how often have I then heard her deep convulsive sobs, and reproached myself for selfishness at the moment for wishing the continuance of her being, which was only wishing the continuance of her misery ! Yes, I have then said, I resign her, my Creator, unto thee ; I resign her, from a certainty that only with thee she can enjoy felicity. But, alas ! in a moment frail Nature has triumphed over such a resignation, and prostrate on the ground I have implored Heaven either to spare the child, or take the father along with her.

She saw me unusually depressed one day, and proposed a walk, with the hope that any exertion from her might recruit my spirits ; but when I saw my child, in the very bloom of life, unable to sustain her feeble frame ; when I felt her leaning on my almost nerveless arm for support, oh ! how intolerable was the anguish that rived my heart ! In vain, by soft endearments, she strove to mitigate it. I averted my face, and wept. She motioned to go towards Woodhouse ; we had got within sight of the wood, when she complained of fatigue, and sat down. She had not been many minutes in this situation, when she beheld, coming from the wood, Belgrave, and a
young

young girl she knew to be the steward's daughter. The familiar manner in which they appeared conversing, left little room to doubt of the footing on which they were. The hectic glow of Juliana's complexion gave place to a deadly paleness; she arose, and returned with me in silence to the cottage, from whence, in less than a week, she was borne to her grave.

Eight years, continued he, after a pause of some minutes, have elapsed since her death, yet is her worth, her beauty, and her sufferings still fresh in the remembrance of the inhabitants of the hamlet. In mine, Oh Miss Fitzalan! how painfully, how pleasingly do they still exist! No noisome weed is allowed to intermingle in the high grass which has overgrown her grave, at the head of which some kind hand has planted a rose-tree, whose roses blossom, bloom, and die upon the sacred spot. My child is gone before me to that earthly bed, to which I hoped she would have smoothed my passage. Every spot in and about the cottage continually recall her to my view; the ornaments of this little room were all the work of that hand, long since mouldered into dust; in that bed—he stopped, he groaned, and tears burst from him—in that bed, resumed he (in a few minutes, though with a broken voice), she breathed her last sigh; in that spot I knelt and received the last pressure of her clay-cold lips. Of a calm night, when all is hushed to repose, I love to contemplate that

Heaven, to which I have given an angel—an angel to whom, I hope, shortly to be re-united; without such a hope, surely, of all men breathing, I should be the most wretched! Oh! how cruel is it then in those who, by raising doubts of an hereafter, attempt to destroy such a hope. Ye sons of error, hide the impious doubts within your hearts, nor with wanton barbarity endeavour to deprive the miserable of their last comfort. When this world presents nothing but a dreary prospect, how cheering to the afflicted to reflect on that future one, where all will be bright and happy. When we mourn over the lost friends of our tenderest affections, Oh! how consolatory to think we shall be re-united to them again; how often has this thought suspended my tears, and stopped my sighs! Inspired by it with sudden joy, often have I risen from the cold bed where Juliana lies, and exclaimed, “O death! where is thy sting? O grave! where is thy victory?” both lost in the certainty of again beholding my child.

Amanda shed tears of soft compassion for the fate of Juliana and the sorrows of her father, and felt, if possible, her gratitude to Heaven increased, for preserving her from the snares of such a monster of deceit and barbarity as Belgrave.

Howell relieved the anxiety she laboured under about the means of returning home, by assuring her he would not only supply her with a sum sufficient for that purpose, but see her to Parkgate himself.

His name struck Amanda; it recalled to remembrance her Welch friend. She enquired, and heard that the young and tender curate was indeed the son of her benefactor. "The softness of Henry's disposition," said his father, "particularly qualifies him for the sacred function, which prevents his having occasion to mingle in the concerns of the great world. He writes me word, that he is the simple shepherd of a simple flock."

One day was all Amanda would devote to the purpose of recruiting her strength; nothing could prevail on her longer to defer her journey. A chaise was accordingly procured, into which, at the first dawn of day, she and Howell stepped, followed by the blessings of the affectionate Eleanor, who, from her own wardrobe, had supplied Amanda with a few necessaries to take along with her. The church-yard lay about a quarter of a mile from the hamlet; it was only divided from the road by a low and broken wall. Old trees shaded the grass-grown grave, and gave a kind of solemn gloominess to the place.

"See," said Howell, suddenly taking Amanda's hand, and letting down the glass, "see the bed where Juliana reposes."

The grave was distinguished by the rose-tree at its head; the morning breeze gently agitated the high and luxuriant grass which covered it. Amanda gazed on it with inexpressible sadness; but the emotions it excited in her breast she endeavoured to check, in

pity to the wretched father, who exclaimed, while tears trickled down his pale and furrowed cheeks, "There lies my treasure."

She tried to divert him from his sorrows, by talking of his son. She described his little residence, which he had never seen: thus, by recalling to his recollection the blessings he yet possessed, checking his anguish for those he had lost.

The weakness of Amanda would not allow them to travel expeditiously. They slept one night on the road, and the next day, to her great joy, arrived at Parkgate, as she had all along dreaded a pursuit from Belgrave. A packet was to sail about four o'clock in the afternoon; she partook of a slight repast with her benevolent friend, who attended her to the boat, and with starting tears gave and received an adieu. She promised to write as soon as she reached home, and assured him his kindness would never be obliterated from her heart. He watched her till she entered the ship, then returned to the inn, and immediately set off for the hamlet, with a mind somewhat cheered by the consciousness of having served a fellow-creature.

CHAP. XV.

The breezy call of incense breathing morn ;
The swallow twittering from its straw-built shed ;
The cock's shrill clarion, or the echoing horn,
No more shall rouse him from his lowly bed.

GRAY.

THE weakness which Amanda felt in consequence of her late illness, and the excessive sickness she always suffered at sea, made her retire to bed immediately on entering the packet, where she continued till the evening of the second day, when, about five o'clock, she was landed at the marine hotel. She directly requested the waiter to procure her a messenger to go into town, which being done, she sent to engage a place in the northern mail coach, that went within a few miles of Castle Carberry. If a place could not be procured, she ordered a chaise might be hired, that would immediately set out with her, as the nights were moonlight ; but, to her great joy, the man speedily returned, and informed her he had secured a seat in the coach, which she thought a much safer mode of travelling for her than in a hired carriage, without any attendant. She took some slight refresh-

ment, and then proceeded to the mail hotel, from whence, at eleven o'clock, she set out, in company with one old gentleman, who very composedly put on a large woollen night cap, buttoned up his great coat, and fell into a profound sleep; he was, perhaps, just such a kind of companion as Amanda desired, as he neither teased her with insipid conversation, or impertinent questions, but left her undisturbed, to indulge her meditations during the journey. The second evening, about eight o'clock, she arrived at the nearest town to Castle Carberry, for which she directly procured a chaise, and set off.

Her spirits were painfully agitated; she dreaded the shock her father would receive from hearing of her sufferings, which it would be impossible to conceal from him; she trembled at what they would both feel on the approaching interview. Sometimes she feared he had already heard of her distress, and a gloomy presage rose in her mind, of the anguish she should find him in on that account: yet again, when she reflected on the fortitude he had hitherto displayed in his trials, under the present, she trusted, he would not lose it; and that he would not only support himself, but her, and bind up those wounds in her heart, which perfidy, cruelty, and ingratitude had made. And Oh! thought she to herself, when I find myself again in his arms, no temptation shall allure me from them; allure me into a world, where my peace and fame have already suffered such a wreck. Thus alternately
fluctuating

fluctuating between hope and fear, Amanda pursued the road to Castle Carberry; but the latter sensation was predominant in her mind.

The uncommon gloominess of the evening added to her dejection; the dark and lowering clouds threatened a violent storm; already a shower of sleet and rain was falling, and every thing looked cold and cheerless. Amanda thought the cabins infinitely more wretched than when she had first seen them; many of their miserable inhabitants were now gathering their little stock together, and driving them under shelter from the coming storm; the labourers were seen hastening to their respective homes, whilst the plough-boy, with a low and melancholy whistle, drove his slow and wearied team along. The sea looked rough and black; and, as Amanda drew nearer to it, she heard it breaking with fury against the rocks.

She felt herself extremely ill; she had left the hamlet ere her fever was subdued, and fatigue, joined to want of rest, now brought it back with all its former violence. She longed for rest and quiet, and trusted and believed these would conquer her malady.

The chaise stopped at the entrance of the lawn, as she wished to have her father prepared for her arrival by one of the servants. On alighting from it, it returned to town, and she struck into the grove, and by a winding path reached the castle. Her limbs trembled, and she knocked with an unsteady hand

at the door. The sound was awfully reverberated through the building; some minutes elapsed, and no being appeared; neither could she perceive a ray of light from any of the windows; the wind blew the rain directly in her face, and her weakness increased so, she could scarcely stand. She recollected a small door at the back of the castle, which led to the apartments appropriated to the domestics; she walked feebly to this, to try and gain admittance, and found it open. She proceeded through a long dark passage, on each side of which were small rooms, till she came to the kitchen; here she found the old woman sitting (to whom the care of the castle was usually consigned) before a large turf fire. On hearing a footstep, she looked behind; and when she saw Amanda, started, screamed, and betrayed symptoms of the utmost terror.

"Are you frightened at seeing me, my good Kate?" cried Amanda.

"Oh Holy Virgin!" replied Kate, crossing her breast, "one could not help being frightened, to have a body steal unawares upon them."

"My father is well, I hope?" said Amanda.

"Alack-a-day!" cried Kate, "the poor dear Captain has gone through a sea of troubles since you went away."

"Is he ill?" exclaimed Amanda.

"Ill, aye, and the Lord knows he has reason enough to be ill. But, my dear jewel, do you know
nothing

nothing at all of what has happened at the castle since you went away?"

"No, nothing in the world."

"Heaven help you then," said Kate; "but, my dear soul, sit down upon this little stool, and warm yourself before the fire, for you look pale and cold, and I will tell you all about it. You must know, about three weeks ago, my Johnaten brought the Captain a letter from the post-office; he knew by the mark it was a letter from England; and so when he comes into the kitchen to me, 'Kate,' says he, 'the Captain has got something now to cheer his spirits, for he has heard from Miss, I am sure.' So, to be sure, I said I was glad of it, for you must know, my dear, he was low in spirits, and peaking, as one may say, for a few days before. Well, it was always my custom, when he got a letter from England, to go to him as soon as I thought he had read it, and ask about you; so I put on a clean apron, and up I goes to the parlour, and I opened the door, and walked in. Well, Sir, says I, I hope there is good news from Miss?"

"The Captain was sitting with the letter open before him on a table: he had a handkerchief to his eyes; but when I spoke, he took it down, and I saw his face, which generally looked so pale, now quite flushed.

'This letter, my good Kate,' says he, 'is not from my daughter, but I am glad you are come, for I wanted to speak to you. I am going to leave the

castle, and I want you to look over all the things, and see they are in the same state as when I came to it; I shall then settle with the servants I hired, and discharge them."

"I was struck all of a heap; the Lord forbid you should be going to leave us, Sir! says I.

"The Captain got up; he walked to the window; he sighed heavily, and I saw a tear upon his cheek. He spoke to me again, and begged I would do as he had desired me; so, with a heavy heart, I went and told my Johnaten the sad tidings, who was as sorry as myself, for he loved the Captain dearly, not only from his being so mild a gentleman, but because he was a soldier, as he himself had been in his youth, and a soldier has always a love for one of his cloth; and Johnaten had often said he knew the Captain in America, and that he was a brave officer, and a real gentleman.

"Well, the Captain came out to us, and said he was to be Lord Cherbury's agent no longer; and being a good penman, he settled all his own accounts, and the servants, in the course of the day, and discharged them, giving them both characters, which I warrant will soon get them good places again. Well, he said he must set off for England the next day, so every thing was got ready; but in the middle of the night he was seized with spasms in his stomach; he thought himself dying, and at last rung the bell; and, as good luck would have it, my
Johnaten.

Johnaten heard it, and went up to him directly: had he been without relief much longer, I think he would have died. Johnaten called me up; I had a choice bottle of old brandy lying by me, so I soon blew up a fire, and heating a cup of it, gave it to him directly. He grew a little easier, but was too bad in the morning to think of going on his journey, which grieved him sadly. He got up, however, and wrote a large packet, which he sent by Johnaten to the post-office; packed up some things in a trunk, and put his seal upon his desk. He said he would not stay in the castle on any account, so he went out as soon as Johnaten came back from the post-office, leaning upon his arm, and got a little lodging at Thady Bryne's cabin."

"Meroiful Heaven!" exclaimed the agonized and almost fainting Amanda, "support and strengthen me in this trying hour; enable me to comfort my unfortunate father; preserve me from sinking, that I may endeavour to assist him." Tears accompanied this fervent ejaculation, and her voice was lost in sobs.

"Alack-a-day!" said the good-natured Kate, "now don't take it so sadly to heart, my jewel; all is not lost that is in danger, and there is as good fish in the sea as ever were caught; and what though this is a stormy night, to-morrow may be a fine day. Why, the very first sight of you will do the Captain good. Come, cheer up, I will give you some nice hot potatoes for your supper, for you see the pot is

just boiling, and some fresh-churned butter-milk; and by the time you have eaten it, Johnaten perhaps may come back: he is gone to town to get some beef for our Sunday dinner, and then I will go with you to Thady's myself."

"No, no," cried Amanda, "every minute I now stay from my father seems an age: too long has he been neglected; too long without a friend to sooth or attend him. Oh grant, gracious Heaven!" raising her clasped hands, "grant that I may not have returned too late to be of use to him!"

Kate pressed her to stay for Johnaten's return; but the agony of suspense she endured till she saw her father, made her regardless of walking alone, though the hour was late, dark, and tempestuous. Kate finding her entreaties vain, attended her to the door, and assured her, if Johnaten returned soon, she would go over herself to the cabin, and see if she could do any thing for her. Amanda pressed her hand, but was unable to speak. Ill, weak, and dispirited, she had flattered herself, on returning to her father, she should receive relief, support, and consolation; instead of which, heart-broken as she was, she now found she must give, or at least attempt giving them, herself. She had before experienced distress, but the actual pressure of poverty she had never yet felt. Heretofore she had always a comfortable asylum to repair to, but now she not only found herself deprived of that, but

bat of all means of procuring one, or even the necessities of life.

But if she mourned for herself, how much more severely did she mourn for her adored father. Could she have procured him comfort, could she in any degree have alleviated his situation, the horrors of her own would have been lessened; but of this she had not the slightest means or prospect. Her father, she knew, possessed the agency too short a time to be enabled to save any money, particularly as he was indebted to Lord Cherbury ere he obtained it; she knew of no being to whom she could apply in his behalf. Lord Cherbury was the only person on whom he depended in his former misfortunes for relief; his friendship, it was evident, by depriving her father of the agency, was totally lost; and to the disconsolate Amanda, no way appeared of escaping "want—worldly want, that hungry meagre fiend, who was already close at their heels, and followed them in view."

The violence of the storm had increased, but it was slight in comparison of that which agitated the bosom of Amanda. The waves dashed with a dreadful noise against the rocks, and the angry spirit of the waters roared; the rain fell heavily, and soon soaked through the thin cloathing of Amanda. She had about half a mile to walk, through a rugged road, bounded on one side by rocks, and on the other by wild and dreary fields. She knew the people with
3
whom

whom her father lodged; they were of the lowest order, and, on her first arriving at Castle Carberry, in extreme distress, from which she had relieved them. She recollected their cabin was more decent than many others she had seen, yet still a most miserable dwelling. Wretched as it was, she was glad when she reached it, for the violence of the storm, and the loneliness of the road, had terrified her. The cabin was but a few yards from the beach; there were two windows in front; on one side a pile of turf, and on the other a shed for the pigs, in which they now lay grunting; the shutters were fastened on the windows, to prevent their being shaken by the wind; but through the crevices Amanda saw light, which convinced her the inhabitants were not yet retired to repose. She feared her suddenly appearing before her father, in his present weak state, might have a dangerous effect upon him; and she stood before the cabin, considering how she should have her arrival broke to him. She at last tapped gently at the door, and then retreated a few steps from it, shivering with the wet and cold: in the beautiful language of Solomon, she might have said, "her head was filled with dew, and her locks with the drops of the night." As she expected, the door was almost instantly opened; a boy appeared, whom she knew to be son to the poor people. She held up her handkerchief, and beckoned him to her; he hesitated, as if afraid to advance, till she called him softly by his name. This assured

assured him; he approached, and expressed astonishment at finding she was the person who had called him. She enquired for her father, and heard he was ill, and then asleep. She desired the boy to enter the cabin before her, and caution his parents against making any noise that might disturb him; he obeyed her, and she followed him.

She found the father of the family blowing a turf fire, to hasten the boiling of a large pot of potatoes. Three ragged children were sitting before it, watching impatiently for their supper. Their mother was spinning, and their old grandmother making bread. The place was small and crowded; half the family slept below, and the other half upon a loft, to which they ascended by a ladder, and upon which a number of fowls were now familiarly roosting, cackling at every noise made below. Fitzalan's room was divided from the rest of the cabin by a thin partition of wood, plastered with pictures of saints and crosses.

"Save you kindly, Madam," said the mistress of the mansion to Amanda on entering it.

Bryne got up, and, with many scrapes, offered her his little stool before the fire; she thanked him, and accepted it. His wife, notwithstanding the obligations she lay under to her, seemed to think as much respect was not due to her as when mistress of the castle, and therefore never left her seat, or quitted her spinning, on her entrance.

"My poor father is very ill," said Amanda.

"Why,

"Why, indeed, the Captain has had a bad time of it," answered Mrs. Bryne, jogging her wheel; "to be sure he has suffered some little change; but your great folks, as well as your simple folks, must look to that in this world; and I don't know why they should not, for they are not better than the others, I believe."

"Arrah, Norah, now," said Bryne, "I wonder you are not shy of speaking so to the poor young lady."

Amanda's heart was furcharged with grief; she felt suffocating; she arose, unlatched the door, and the keen cold air a little revived her. Tears burst forth; she indulged them freely, and they lightened the load on her heart. She asked for a glass of water; a glass was not readily to be procured. Bryne told her she had better take a noggin of butter-milk. This she refused, and he brought her one of water.

She now conquered the reluctance she felt to speak to the uncouth Mrs. Bryne, and consulted her on the best method of mentioning her arrival to her father. Mrs. Bryne said he had been in bed some time, but his sleep was often interrupted, and she would now step into the chamber, and try if he was awake; she accordingly did so, but returned in a moment, and said he still slept.

Amanda wished to see him in his present situation, to judge how far his illness had affected him; she stepped softly into the room; it was small and low, lighted by a glimmering rush-light, and a declining fire.

fire. The furniture was poor and scanty; in one corner stood a wooden bedstead, without curtains, or any shade, and on this, under miserable bed clothes, lay poor Fitzalan.

Amanda shuddered as she looked round this chamber of wretchedness. "Oh, my father!" she cried to herself, "is this the only refuge you could find?" She went to the bed, she leaned over it, and beheld his face; it was deadly pale and emaciated; he moaned in his sleep, as if his mind was dreadfully oppressed. Suddenly he began to move; he sighed, "Amanda, my dearest child, shall I never more behold you?"

Amanda was obliged to hasten from the room to give vent to her emotions; she sobbed, she wrung her hands, and, in the bitterness of her soul, exclaimed, "Alas! alas! I have returned too late to save him."

They soon after heard him stir. She requested Mrs. Bryne to go in, and cautiously inform him she was come. She complied, and in a moment Amanda heard him say, "Thank Heaven, my darling is returned."

"You may now go in, Miss," said Mrs. Bryne, coming from the room.

Amanda went in; her father was raised in the bed; his arms were extended to receive her; she threw herself into them; language was denied them both, but tears, even more expressive than words, evinced their feelings. Fitzalan first recovered his voice. "My prayer,"

prayer," said he, "is granted; Heaven has restored my child to smooth the pillow of sickness, and sooth the last moments of existence."

"Oh, my father!" cried Amanda, "have pity on me, and mention not those moments; exert yourself for your child, who, in this wide world, has she but thee to comfort, support, and befriend her!"

"Indeed," said he, "for your sake I wish they may be far distant."

He held her at a little distance from him; he surveyed her face, her form; her altered complexion, her fallen features, appeared to shock him; he clasped her again to his bosom. "The world, my child, I fear," cried he, "has used thee most unkindly."

"Oh! most cruelly," sobbed Amanda.

"Then, my girl, let the reflection of that world, where innocence and virtue will meet a proper reward, console you: here they are often permitted to be tried; but as gold is tried, and purified by fire, so are they by adversity. "Those whom God loves, he chastises." Let this idea give you patience and fortitude under every trial; never forego your dependence on him, though calamity should pursue you to the very brink of the grave; but be comforted by the assurance he has given, that those who meekly bear the cross he lays upon them shall be rewarded; that he will wipe away all tears from their eyes, and swallow up death in victory.

"Though

“Though a foldier from my youth, and accustomed to all the licentiousness of camps, I never forgot my Creator, and I now find the benefit of not having done so; now when my friends desert, the world frowns upon me, when sickness and sorrow have overwhelmed me, religion stands me in good stead, consoles me for what I lost, and softens the remembrance of the past, by presenting prospects of future brightness.”

So spoke Fitzalan the pious sentiments of his soul, and they calmed the agitations of Amanda. He found her clothes were wet, and insisted on her changing them directly. In the bundle the good Eleanor gave her was a change of linen, and a cotton wrapper, which she now put on in a small closet, or rather shed, adjoining her father's room. A good fire was made up, a better light brought in, and some bread and wine from a small cupboard in the room, which contained Fitzalan's things, set before her, of which he made her immediately partake. He took a glass of wine himself from her, and tried to cheer her spirits. He had been daily expecting her arrival, he said, and had had a pallet and bed-clothes kept airing for her; he hoped she would not be dissatisfied with sleeping in the closet.

“Ah, my father!” she cried, “can you ask your daughter such a question?” She expressed her fears of injuring him, by having disturbed his repose.

“No.”

"No," he said, "it was a delightful interruption; it was a relief from pain and anxiety."

Lord Cherbury, he informed her, had written him a letter, which pierced him to the soul. "He accused me," said he, "of endeavouring to promote a marriage between you and Lord Mortimer, of treacherously trying to counteract his views, and take advantage of his unsuspecting friendship. I was shocked at these accusations; but how excruciating would my anguish have been, had I really deserved them. I soon determined upon the conduct I should adopt, which was to deny the justice of his charges, and resign his agency; for any further dealings with a man who could think me capable of meanness or duplicity was not to be thought of. My accounts were always in a state to allow me to resign at a moment's warning. It was my intention to go to England, put them into Lord Cherbury's hands, and take my Amanda from a place where she might meet with indignities, as little merited by her as those her father had received were by him. A sudden and dreadful disorder, which I am convinced the agitation of my mind brought on, prevented my executing this intention. I wrote, however, to his Lordship, acquainting him with my resignation of his agency, and transmitting my accounts and arrears. I sent a letter to you at the same time, with a small remittance for your immediate return, and then retired from the castle; for I felt a longer continuance in it would degrade

degrade me to the character of a mean dependant, and intimate a hope of being reinstated in my former station; which, should Lord Cherbury now offer, I should reject; for ignoble must be the mind which could accept of favours from those who doubted its integrity. Against such conduct my feelings revolt; poverty to me is more welcome than independence, when purchased with the loss of esteem."

Amanda perceived her father knew nothing of her sufferings, but supposed her return occasioned by his letter; she therefore resolved, if possible, not to undeceive him, at least till his health was better.

The night was far advanced, and her father, who saw her ill, and almost sinking with fatigue, requested her to retire to rest: she accordingly did. Her bed was made up in the little closet; Mrs. Bryne assisted her to undress, and brought her a bowl of whey, which, she trusted, with a comfortable sleep, would carry off her feverish symptoms, and enable her to be her father's nurse.

Her rest, however, was far from being comfortable; it was broken by horrid dreams, in which she beheld the pale and emaciated figure of her father suffering the most exquisite tortures; and when she started from these dreams, she heard his deep moans, which were like daggers going through her heart. She arose once or twice, supposing him in pain; but when she went to his bed, she found him asleep, and was
convinced,

convinced, from that circumstance, his pain was more of the mental than the bodily kind. She felt extremely ill; her bones were sore, from the violent motion of the carriage, and she fancied rest would do her good; but when, towards morning, she was inclined to take some, she was completely prevented by the noise the children made on rising. Fearful of neglecting her father, she arose soon after herself, but was scarcely able to put on her clothes, from excessive weakness. She found him in bed, but awake. He welcomed her with a languid smile, and extending his hand, which was reduced to mere skin and bone, said, "that joy was a greater enemy to repose than grief, and had broken his earlier than usual that morning."

He made her sit down by him; he gazed on her with unutterable tenderness. "In divine language," cried he, "I may say, 'let me see thy countenance, let me hear thy voice; for sweet is thy voice, and thy countenance is comely, and my soul has pleasure in gazing on it.'"

The kettle was already boiling; he had procured a few necessaries for himself, such as tea things and glasses. Amanda placed the tea table by the bedside, and gave him his breakfast. Whilst receiving it from her, his eyes were raised to Heaven, as if in thankful gratitude for the inestimable blessing he still possessed in such a child. After breakfast, he said he would rise, and Amanda retired into the garden till he was dressed, if that could deserve the appellation, which

was

was only a slip of ground, planted with cabbages and potatoes, and enclosed with loose stones and blackberry bushes. The spring was already advanced; the day was fine; the light and fleecy clouds were gradually dispersing; and the sky, almost as far as the eye could reach, was of a clear blue. The dusky green of the blackberry bushes was enlivened by the pale purple of their blossoms; tufts of primroses grew beneath their shelter; the fields, which rose with a gentle swell above the garden, were covered with a vivid green, spangled with daisies, buttercups, and wild honeysuckles; and the birds, as they fluttered from spray to spray, with notes of gladness hailed the genial season.

But neither the season nor its charms could now, as heretofore, delight Amanda; she felt forlorn and disconsolate; deprived of the comforts of life, and no longer interested in the objects about her, she sat down upon a stone at the end of the garden, and she thought the fresh breeze from the sea cooled the feverish heat of her blood. "Alas!" she said to herself, "at this season last year, how different was my situation from the present!" Though not in affluence, neither was she then in absolute distress; and she had besides the comfortable hope of having her father's difficulties removed; like Burn's mountain daisy, she had then cheerfully glinted forth amidst the storm, because she thought that storm would be soon overblown; but
now

now she saw herself on the point of being finally crushed beneath the rude pressure of poverty.

She recollected the words which had escaped her when she last saw Tudor-Hall, and she thought they were dictated by something like a prophetic spirit. She had then said, as she leaned upon a little gate which looked into the domain, "when these woods again glow with vegetation; when every shade resounds with harmony, and the flowers and the blossoms spread their foliage to the sun, ah! where will Amanda be? far distant, in all probability, from these delightful shades; perhaps deserted and forgotten by their master."

She was indeed far distant from them; deserted, and if not forgotten, at least only remembered with contempt by their master—remembered with contempt by Lord Mortimer. It was an idea of intolerable anguish; his name was no more repeated as a charm to sooth her grief; his idea increased her misery.

She continued indulging her melancholy meditations, till informed by one of the children the Captain was ready to receive her. She hastened in, and found him in an old high-backed chair, and the ravages of care and sickness were now more visible to her than they had been the night before; he was reduced to a mere skeleton; "the original brightness of his form" was quite gone, and he seemed already on the very brink of the grave. The agony of Amanda's feelings

ings was expressed on her countenance; he perceived and guessed its source. He endeavoured to compose and comfort her. She mentioned a physician; he tried to dissuade her from the idea of bringing one, but she besought him, in compassion to her, to consent; and, overcome by her earnestness, he at last promised the ensuing day she should do as she wished.

It was now Sunday, and he desired the service of the day to be read. A small Bible lay on the table before him, and Amanda complied with his desire. In the first lesson were these words, "Leave thy fatherless children to me, and I will be their father." The tears gushed from Fitzalan; he laid his hand, which appeared convulsed with agitation, on the book, "Oh what words of comfort!" cried he, "are these! what transport do they convey to the heart of a parent burthened with anxiety! Yes, merciful power! I will, with grateful joy, commit my children to thy care, for thou art the friend who will never forsake them." He desired Amanda to proceed; her voice was weak and broken, and the tears, in spite of her efforts to restrain them, stole down her cheeks.

When she had concluded, her father drew her towards him, and enquired into all that had passed during her stay in London. She related to him, without reserve, the various incidents she had met with previous to her going to the Marchioness's; acknowledged the hopes and fears she experienced on

Lord Mortimer's account, and the arguments he had made use of, to induce her to a clandestine union, with her positive refusal to such a step.

A beam of pleasure illumined the pallid face of Fitzalan. "You acted," said he, "as I expected; and I glory in my child, and feel more indignation than ever against Lord Cherbury for his mean suspicions." Amanda was convinced those suspicions had been infused into his mind by those who had struck at her peace and fame. This idea, however, as well as their injuries to her, she meant, if possible, to conceal. When her father, therefore, desired her to proceed in her narrative, her voice began to falter, her mind became disturbed, and her countenance betrayed her agitation. The remembrance of the dreadful scenes she had gone through at the Marchioness's made her involuntarily shudder, and she wished to conceal them for ever from her father, but found it impossible to evade his minute and earnest enquiries.

"Gracious Heaven!" said he, on hearing them, "what complicated cruelty and deceit! inhuman monsters! to have no pity on one so young, so innocent, so helpless; the hand of sorrow has indeed pressed heavy on thee, my child; but after the Marchioness's former conduct, I cannot be surprised at any action of hers."

He gave her a note to discharge her debt to Howell, and begged she would immediately write, and return
his

his grateful acknowledgments for his benevolence. She feared he inconvenienced himself by parting with the note, but he assured her he could spare it extremely well, as he had been an economist, and had still sufficient money to support them a few months longer in their present situation.

Amanda now enquired when he had heard from her brother; she said he had not answered her last letter, and that his silence had made her very uneasy.

“ Alas, poor Oscar ! ” exclaimed Fitzalan, “ he has not been exempt from his portion of distress.”

He took a letter as he spoke from his pocket-book, and presented it to Amanda. She opened it with a trembling hand, and read as follows:—

"My dear Father,

“ Particular circumstances prevented my answering your last letter as soon as I could have wished; and, indeed, the intelligence I have to communicate makes me almost averse to write at all. As my situation, however, must sooner or later be known to you, I think it better to inform you of it myself, as I can, at the same time, reconcile you, I trust, in some degree to it, by assuring you I bear it patiently, and that it has not been caused by any action which can degrade my character, as a man or a soldier. I have long, indeed, had a powerful enemy to cope with, and it will, no doubt, surprise you to hear that that enemy is Colonel Belgrave. An interference in the cause of

humanity provoked his insolence and malignity; neither his words nor looks were bearable, and I was irritated by them to send him a challenge. Had I reflected, the probable consequences of such a step must have occurred, and prevented my taking it; but passion blinded my reason, and in yielding to its dictates, do I hold myself alone culpable throughout the whole affair. I gave him the opportunity his malicious heart had long desired, of working my ruin; I was, by his order, put under an immediate arrest. A court-martial was held, and I was broke, for disrespect to a superior officer; but it was imagined by the whole corps I should have been restored. I, however, knew too much of Belgrave's disposition to believe this would be the case; but never shall he triumph in the distress he has caused, by witnessing it. I have already settled on the course I shall pursue; and ere this letter reaches you, I shall have quitted my native kingdom. Forgive me, my dear Sir, for not consulting you relative to my conduct; but I feared, if I did, your tenderness would interfere to prevent it, or lead you to distress yourself on my account; and to think that you and my dear sister were deprived of the smallest comfort by my means, would be a source of intolerable anguish to me. Blessed as I am with youth, health, and fortitude, I have no doubt but I shall make my way through the rugged path of life extremely well. A parting visit I avoided, from the certainty of its being painful to us both. I shall
write

write as soon as I reach my place of destination. I rejoice to hear Amanda is so happily situated with Lady Greystock; may your suffering and her merit be rewarded as they deserve. Suffer not, I entreat, too tender an anxiety for my interest to disturb your repose. I again repeat, I have no doubt but what I shall do well; that Providence, in which I trust, will, I humbly hope, support me through every difficulty, and again unite me to the friends so valuable to my heart. Farewel, my dear father, and be assured, with unabated respect and gratitude, I subjoin myself your affectionate son,

“ OSCAR FITZALAN.”

This letter was a cruel shock to Amanda; she hoped to have procured her brother's company, and that her father's melancholy, and her own, would have been alleviated by it. Sensible of the difficulties Oscar must undergo, without friends or fortune, the tears stole down her cheeks, and she almost dreaded she could no more behold him.

Her father besought her to spare him the misery of seeing those tears; he leaned upon her for comfort and support, he said, and bid her not disappoint him. She hastily wiped away her tears; and though she could not conquer, tried to suppress her anguish.

Johnaten and Kate called in the course of the day to know if they could be of any service to Fitzalan. Amanda engaged Johnaten to go to town the next

morning for a physician, and gave Kate the key of a wardrobe where she had left some things, which she desired her to pack up, and send to the cabin in the evening. Mrs. Bryne gave them one of her fowls for dinner, and Fitzalan assumed an appearance of cheerfulness, and the evening wore away somewhat better than the preceding part of the day had done.

Johnaten was punctual in obeying Amanda's commands, and brought a physician the next morning to the cabin. Fitzalan appeared much worse, and Amanda rejoiced that she had been resolute in procuring him advice.

She withdrew from the room soon after the physician had entered it, and waited without in trembling anxiety for his appearance.

When he came out, she asked, with a faltering voice, his opinion, and besought him not to deceive her, from pity to her feelings.

He shook his head, and assured her he would not deviate from truth for the world. The Captain was indeed in a ticklish situation, he said, but the medicines he had ordered, and sea-bathing, he doubted not would set all to rights; it was fortunate, he added, she delayed no longer sending for him; mentioned twenty miraculous cures he had performed, admired the immense fine prospect before the door, and wished her good morning, with what he thought quite a *dégagé*, and irresistible air.

She

She was willing to believe his assurances of her father's recovery ; as the drowning wretch will grasp at every straw, she eagerly embraced the shadow of comfort, and, in the recovery of her father, looked forward to consolation for all her sorrows. She struggled against her own illness, that no assiduous attention might be wanting to him ; and would have sat up with him at night, had he not positively insisted on her going to bed.

The medicines he was ordered he received from her hands, but with a look which seemed to express his conviction of their inefficacy. All, however, she wished him to do, he did, and often raised his eyes to Heaven, as to implore it to reward her care, and yet a little longer spare him to this beloved child, whose happiness so much depended on the prolongation of his existence.

Four days passed heavily away, and the assurances of the physician, who was punctual in his attendance, lost their effect upon Amanda.

Her father was considerably altered for the worse, and unable to rise, except for a few minutes in the evening to have his bed made. He complained of no pain or sickness, but seemed sinking beneath an easy and gradual decay. It was only at intervals he could converse with his daughter. His conversation was then calculated to strengthen her fortitude and resignation, and prepare her for an approaching melancholy event. Whenever she received a hint of it,

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her

her agony was inexpressible; but pity for her feelings could not prevent her father from using every opportunity that occurred for laying down rules and precepts which might be serviceable to her when without a guide or protector. Sometimes he adverted to the past, but this was only done to make her more cautious of the future.

He charged her to avoid any further intimacy with Lord Mortimer, as an essential measure for the restoration of her peace, the preservation of her fame, and the removal of Lord Cherbury's unjust suspicions, "who will find at last," continued he, "how much he wronged me, and may, perhaps, feel compunction when beyond his power to make reparation."

To all he desired, Amanda promised a religious observance; she thought it unnecessary in him, indeed, to desire her to avoid Lord Mortimer, convinced, as she was, that he had utterly abandoned her; but the grief this desertion occasioned, she believed she should soon overcome, was her father once restored to health, for then she would have no time for useless regrets or retrospections, but be obliged to pass every hour in active exertions for his support and comfort.

A week passed away in this manner at the cabin; a week of wretchedness to Amanda, who perceived her father growing weaker and weaker.

She assisted him, as usual, to rise one evening for a few minutes; when dressed, he complained of an
oppression

oppression in his breathing, and desired to be supported to the air. Amanda, with difficulty, led him to the window, which she opened, and seated him by it; then knelt before him, and putting her arms round his waist, fastened her eyes with anxious tenderness upon his face.

The evening was serenely fine; the sun was setting in all its glory, and the sea, illumined by its parting beams, looked like a sheet of burnished silver.

“What a lovely scene!” cried Fitzalan faintly, “with what majesty does the sun retire from the world! the calmness which attends its departure is such, I think, as must attend the exit of a good man.

He paused for a few minutes, then raising his eyes to Heaven, exclaimed, “Merciful Power! had it pleased thee, I could have wished yet a little longer to have been spared to this young creature; but thy will, not mine, be done. Confiding in thy mercy, I leave her with some degree of fortitude.”

Amanda’s tears began to flow as he spoke; he raised his hand on which they fell, and kissing them off, exclaimed, “Precious drops! my Amanda, weep not too bitterly for me; like a weary traveller, think that rest must now be acceptable to me.”

She interrupted him, and conjured him to change the discourse. He shook his head mournfully, pressed her hands between his, and said,

“Yet

“ Yet a little longer, my child, bear with it ;” then bid her assure her brother, whenever they met, which he trusted and believed would be soon, he had his father’s blessing, “ the only legacy,” he cried, “ I can leave him, but one, I am confident, he merits, and will value ; to you, my girl, I have no doubt he will prove a friend and guardian ; you may both, perhaps, be amply recompensed for all your sorrows. Providence is just in all its dealings, and may yet render the lovely offspring of my Malvina truly happy.”

He appeared exhausted by speaking, and Amanda assisted him to lie down, entreating him at the same time to take some drops. He consented ; and while she was pouring them out at a little table, her back to the bed, she heard a deep groan ; the bottle dropped from her hand, she sprang to the bed, and perceived her father lying senseless on the pillow. She imagined he had fainted, and screamed out for assistance.

The woman of the cabin, her husband, and mother, all rushed into the room ; he was raised up, his temples and hands chafed, and every remedy within the house applied for his recovery, but in vain ; his spirit had forsaken its tenement of clay for ever.

Amanda, when convinced of this, wrung her hands together ; then suddenly opening them, she clasped the lifeless body to her breast, and sunk fainting beside it.

END OF VOL. II.



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